

# The GUARDIAN

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# THE GUARDIAN

*a monthly journal of life, art and letters published in Philadelphia*

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Published by THE GUARDIAN PUBLISHING COMPANY 720 Locust Street  
(West of Washington Square), Philadelphia Pa.

"Entered as second class matter November 19th, 1924.  
at the Post Office at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
under Act of March 3rd 1879."

JACOB HOFFMAN, *Business Manager*



# The GUARDIAN

DECEMBER 1924.

## Anatole France

BY JOSEPH T. SHIPLEY

Dried apricots were tart in the repose  
Of his soft features, wrinkling for a smile.  
Life was a garment lifted to disclose  
The upstarts that assumed it for awhile  
In proud parade. He knew the bold aspect  
Fear drew upon its quavers, the sly, calm  
Reason that clothed rash will, sweet love that decked  
Wild lust, intolerance that intoned a psalm.

He saw hands raised to snatch the garment down,  
For man will not endure the sight of man  
But grace his imperfections with a crown  
And find his beauty where the lie began.

He wove fair strands of truth for his delight,  
Then in quaint pattern guarded them from sight.

\* \* \*

So many years ago that he can now look not too severely on presumptuous youth, a young man just out of college answered a casual question: "Oh yes, I know French literature!" He had, indeed, after the usual survey of "the classics", lingered with a more than passing interest among the late Latin and earliest French student songs, the rollicking records of drinking delights, of hard-won learning and hatred of pretence; he had wandered under the Pleiade that lightened the dawn of the sixteenth century; even among the twentieth century poets that were later to reclaim the proud constellar title, he had found friends. Of prose he had sought out curious dells and clearings: Daudet, du Maupassant, La Comedie humaine—and a revulsion from both Hugo and Zola, the one empty sky, the other verminous earth — had led him to Beroalde de Ver-ville, Cyrano de Bergerac, Choderles de Lacles, and from these by a natural progression he had found Louis Bertrand and

his great successor, Baudelaire. In the diabolical school he had revelled, at first with the fearsome delight that springs from teasing one's conscience, then with a fuller appreciation of the beauty of "flowers of evil." He had just found English expression for Mallarme's "Afternoon of a Faun"—which Debussy sought to translate into music; he was whetting his tools for the polished language of Baudelaire's prose-poems. "Oh yes, I know French literature!"

"What have you read of Anatole France?" The name was another of a long, slighted list: "Le Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard", and the Academy approved that, so the odds are against it;" his tone dismissed the man. But the friend insisted; "If France had written nothing after that book, he would be as Joyce had there never come Ulysses; (The comparison is anachronous, but apt; nor can I recall the actual allusion); but Anatole France *is* France!" With a tolerant smile, the youth went his way. Some while later, he fingered a copy of "Thais."

\* \* \*

The purest emotions are those that well out of our own sensibility, irrespective of the object upon which they chance to center. The philosopher, Croce observes, does not rejoice in the fortuitous downfall of a malefactor, knowing that life has merely shifted the conditions in which he must strive for adjustment. The desire for edification or enjoyment, the expectancy of reciprocity or merit, befog the aesthetic or the amorous impulse. To the supreme genius, whom we might call divine, all things are dear, as all are beautiful. The sensing of this general belovedness and beauty demands a detachment from the personal concerns, from the prides and ambitions and lusts of life; it requires a "large disinterestedness" that few achieve, and none wins cheaply. For pride and ambition and



lust (with their correspondent greeds and fears) are the urgent forces that lead men to weave the romance they call their lives, that drive them subsequently to believe the illusions they have builded: he therefore that has freed himself of interested feeling has set himself apart from other men; he has lost in heat what he has gained in light; he is somewhat more and somewhat less than human.

This is the distinction and the weakness of Anatole France; yet the quality of his detachment is colored as with an early drop of disillusionment that has gradually pervaded and stained his fluid thought. Love, in its deepest and simplest manifestation, the summoning of body and spirit to full communion with body and spirit, he seems never to have known. Woman, he states, (through the mouth of the abbe Coignard) exists for man's seduction and man's solace. Even his early heroines—Thais, Therese—are hammered in bronze rather than flesh-rounded; love that is at first delightfully sensual grows increasingly sensual, with sharper and more cynical salacities. From the vantage point of his disinterestedness Anatole France, instead of achieving universal love, perceives that love, even love itself, is one of the illusions: he attains therefore only to pity. Similarly beauty resolves itself into dexterity; France feels "a conscious approval for the brushwork of the creator." Yet his detachedness enables him to get behind the scenes, to watch, to feel it not beyond his withheld power to share, the manipulation of the strings that animate the penguin-puppets that call themselves men; and irony has come to balance pity, in famous formula.

This sense of superior cleverness, glorified as irony and pity, has perhaps even added to France's disinterestedness, to his willingness to remain an amused spectator of the human farce-tragedy. We are told by various radical groups, eager to find renowned sustainers, that France was of them; yet his post was always in the neutral grandstand—neither on the team nor in the cheering-squad, but with those who come ready to applaud a good play or frown at poor sportmanship on either side, knowing that the ultimate victory matters less than the clean and the graceful playing. His satires are directed, not against the evils of the world, but against the stupidities and the follies. Whether supporting the radicals, as in the Dreyfus case, or attacking them, as in his picture of the French Revolution, it is always the same weaknesses he stabs: vulgarity and snobbism, stupidity and folly and pride.

A few months before he died Anatole France gave to Henri Barbusse, who had rebuked him for his inactivity, a signed sheet, saying: "Write over my signature whatever you wish; I shall not contradict it." And Barbusse laments that France saw the need for action when he was too old. But at the time of the Dreyfus case, years before, Anatole France was no younger; despite the flash of youth in his gesture of 1914, he was never really young. At least, age, the period of philosophic contemplation, had come to France before the public found him ("The Crime of Sylvestre Bonnard" was crowned when he was thirty-seven)—whatever adolescent fervors he may have expended in royalist dreams or scholarly longings, in his father's haunted bookshop. The aged may provoke revolutions, but the young fight them.

Critics have said that in his works France does not point his satire, but allows it to carry home of its own weight; in other words, his purpose is not to correct evil, but to expose ignorance. Anatole France thus feels no deep pangs of suffering humanity, he experiences no wide sympathy with his brother-men; he stands apart, observes, and comments upon the machinations he sees so clearly through, and upon the men and women who are the dupes of these devices.

If life be a dwelling the timber whereof is a dreaming, the walls and their hangings the fabrication of men's timorous minds, that put four barriers between themselves and the dark cold of reality, what more useful business can occupy a man than pleasantly to decorate the habitation? For if illusion be at the core of life, surely the arch-illusion is that unceasing shift of outward circumstance denominated progress; and he is double victim who strives for betterment. "When I see that a delusion has been cleared away", says France, "I look around to see what greater one will take its place." From such a practice inevitably comes the precept: "Recognize the illusions, then consent to live in accordance with them." So a graceful acquiescence in the established order, extracting all possible entertainment out of the Academy which he joined, out of the state which he defended, became the *modus vivendi*, the *modus scribendi*, of Anatole France.

An attitude in life and literature that leads to stylistic perfection, to subtle ratiocination (necessary at times for self-justification), to delicate balancing of nuance and overtone, to the fine divarication that carries from the simpleton to the sophisticated simple — to cynicism, with its accompanying train of petty belittlings and scoffs and mockeries, to self-mockery—and perhaps to moments of unacknowledged self-contempt. Yet, after the fervor of youth, the nearest man can come to the universal love he calls divine.

So the hollowness of the structure is forgotten—if ever discovered—in contemplation of the mottled marble surface on which the sunlight plays. Especially true is this of America, where the deafening, dulling tumult of a hideous democracy makes triply welcome—to those who cannot find beauty even in our "civilization"—the aristocratic ease of the classics, with their austerity decked in the jeweled prose of Anatole. The flavor of all luxuriant, sensuous pasts is treasured here; summoned to the stark present is whispered blushing joy, and its sparkling justification. Love stands forth: Venus Anadyomene, lustrous pearl of the sea, twined with the breath of cinnabar about the soul. Beauty? of pulsing flesh, and of the antique vase: turned with curious devotion, glazed with a story cunningly told, of not too reluctant nymph and following satyr; look upon the beauty of the vase, and question not as to what lies within.

"Distinction and clarity, and beauty and symmetry, and tenderness and truth and urbanity." So are the desired characteristics enumerated, by him who in America comes nearest Anatole. But Cabell is less frequently tender—though he has his "starling" moments: less frequently tender, less frequently amused. If France feels that illusion is the power that makes us march, Cabell has written a dozen volumes to prove that Romance is God. "Meanwhile illiteracy is be-



coming as rare as all the other characteristics of the Golden Age" is but one of the comments France forgot to make, which Cabell caught up for him. The American too is rich in lore; yet he seems often to have hunted for his information, whereas in France the fact exists naturally where it is expected, welling from a subliminal reservoir. France is more intimate, less reserved, less impersonal; more willing, perhaps, to include himself in his mockery of humankind. Happier—for in Cabell youth holds one outpost still—to carve a string of iridescent shells in which one dimly hears faint murmurs of the stormy sea of life. More cynical. More suave. The prince of darkness is a gentleman.\*)

To his generation in America it may seem heresy — save to those who glory in his Manicheism—to class Anatole France as devil's advocate; and indeed by his own devilish logic might it be established that one who thinks so little of this life is largely devout in spirit. Yet in his own land both the rebels and the Catholics have cast him forth. Hear him on the experimentalists of his youth: "Symbolism will rule the future, if the nervous condition which produced it becomes general. Unfortunately M. Ghil says O is blue, and M. Rimbaud says O is red . . . And these exquisite invalids argue under the

\*) Indeed, did not France throughout his lifetime abide in the hell of George Bernard Shaw, where nothing is denied the damned save depth of feeling? Think of the agonies of boredom that would throb in his brain after only an eon or two of contemplation of humanity. Is not Lucifer divinity tainted with pride?

indulgent eyes of M. Mallarme." Then do not wonder that the new experimentalists dismiss him as "the witty trifter, with a set, beatific smile." For the faithful, he reveals a Saint Joan made comprehensibly human, a penguin-god whose theological discussions are their own *reductio ad absurdum*, an Adversary who scorns to take the deadly dull throne of heaven, and an abbe who clothes with subtle, pious justification all his sensual indulgence. Then do not feel surprise that the Catholics retort: "Continuous irony . . . is a mark of narrowness of mind and dryness of heart. To mock at everything is to understand nothing; and how often irony conceals levity, want of reflection, and dull contempt! It is easier to smile than to think." It may be nearer to France's limitation, and that of all mankind, to say (despite the well-known kinship), "it is easier to pity than to love."

Anatole France! Creator of treasured trifles—yet kin to Socrates, "corrupter of youth." For those who linger in the crystalline delights of verbal play and mental subtleties may dally too long, may be forever lured from that direct concern with life which leads to earthly glory. Fortunately for the position of our country among the nations of the world, few readers here dwell long upon such fancies, or carry into their daily toil the fragile truths of their perusal. To most, then, France affords the charming release, the gentleman's escape from vulgar life into a world where wit wears the garments of wisdom, and pleasure takes on the countenance of love.



# LESION

BY BERNARD DeVOTO

## I

The evidence concerning Arthur Penberthy begins with shreds of blood-stained gauze. All else, the profession felt when it turned from the miracles of his surgery to wonder what manner of man this was who could work miracles, all else was talk. Scandal there was, God knew, about every mortal whose head reared above the herd. Nine and an odd-point times in ten your eminent man was innocent even of suspicion against him, being used to mirror whatever your herd for the moment feared. And if your odd-point fraction must be invoked for Arthur Penberthy, said the profession in its manner, all aberrations were forgiven a man who built with miracles as other men with bricks.

So, to the interested, only the gauze remains — blood-stained, renewed from day to day.

Under a microscope, a bit of tissue will betray its own pathology. Arthur Penberthy made use of such means for diagnosis. The shred of gauze in his card case had never had professional attention but was no less traumatic. But, fortunately, the trauma was concealed under a number of years, years which went back to a happier, a less complex America.

## II

Springfield, Illinois, 1888, the third week of September. The Republican press must be somewhat gentler to Grover Cleveland than it was four years ago. He is President now; and the chastity of Mr. Harrison, his opponent, forbids libel. John L. Sullivan recently exhibited himself in Springfield. Illinois Central is again upset. And Arthur Penberthy, after three months as a Penberthy in Springfield, is saying good-bye to the servants, with dignity, before returning to the Harvard medical school.

He is to be a surgical Penberthy, as his father was a juridical Penberthy and his grandfather a speculating Penberthy. The profession, after all, is only phase; the Penbertharian essence remains constant. Arthur Penberthy, ending his ancestral review at the stables, is the fourth generation in Springfield. There are younger sons, but there always have been, and they have never mattered. Arthur, in the moderated September sun, is alone in the sight of God.

The dog-cart is to be shined; the harness is to be gone over again with saddle soap; the chestnut, Albert-Edward, is to be given another, unorthodox, small mash. Adequate reason for these commands is discoverable an hour or so later

when Arthur Penberthy drives out the Beardstown road with Mary Farnam.

Marriage with Arthur Penberthy, he conceives, is of more than ordinary seriousness. He is twenty-six; time that a Penberthy *primogenitus* should marry. He would have Mary appreciate how thoroughly she is fitted for the destiny he has selected for her. Though her fitness would be evident in his having selected her, he would require a mild gratitude. Springfield harbors two or three others who are within a fine line of qualification. Elizabeth Wallace is the daughter of an ambassador and has, ancestrally, lived in Springfield since it succeeded Alton and since the original Penberthy occupation. Alicia Devens is not so securely established as Elizabeth but is compensatingly endowed with coal lands. But he is willing to have Mary understand her superiority.

The Farnam acreage is not contemptible and the most acute chapter of Illinois Central is written under the Farnam name. In both of these reflections he finds evidence of hereditary intelligence. Farnam women are born hostesses; there is the Penberthy table. And of the family Mary is unquestionably the prettiest. The class in anatomy at Harvard medical school inspects her through Arthur Penberthy's eyes. Beneath that fashionable surfeit of clothes there is strength of bone. Penberthys, he has recalled, do not perish with this generation. Any Penberthy is but the begetter of his firstborn.

At such times women may not anticipate. Mary must receive with a fiction of surprise, of confusion, the felicity he has prepared for her. Yet she has had sufficient intimation. She cannot misunderstand; especially since it is only human to be a little exalted at the offered hand of a Penberthy. For Arthur will offer his hand. There must be dignity. He would prefer to make a formal tender of the Penberthy security, prerogatives, and future. He would be by nature grave, courtly. He would have Mary grave, if tremulous, in return.

But he is aware of a certain levity, not to say frivolity, in her disposition. In a girl, it may well be becoming, and she will learn to subdue it. It has made him uneasy at times, when it has seemed almost to tremble toward him. Today he is quickened to moderate anger to find his frivolity unsubdued, though she must anticipate her greatest moment. He disapproves what amounts to a defect. This is flippancy, comparable to her laughter, a week ago, when Tom Wallace, driving in from the state fair, brought cider and greasy sandwiches for the party of six. Arthur had suffered the indignity in silence, but when Tom threw at him the sandwich he refused



he informed Tom that he was a vulgarian. No further condemnation was necessary. Yet Mary, undistressed, had laughed. And she is smiling now.

The setting might well be, in one way is, his planning. No memory of the torrid Illinois Summer remains. The oaks and elms, iron-rust to the tips, might be colored with frost instead of heat. Ripe corn stretches over the hills till mist turns it lavender. The sun slanting toward the river is reserved, reminiscent. There are mallards in high flight southward. A day for Arthur Penberthy's annual farewell to Springfield, for the virgin offer of his hand.

Albert-Edward paces with recognition of what is due the Penberthy stables. Suddenly, at the edge of woods, he shies. A half dozen boys brandish bags, shout hellos, pelt the equipage with nuts. They are a vivid color in the afternoon, young and arrogant, a vitality reflected in Mary's cheeks.

"I love them," she cries, and looks back down the stretch of macadam that has lengthened behind. "Don't you, Arthur?"

Arthur has subdued Albert-Edward. "No," he says. "I do not."

Mary looks at him. He identifies amusement in her smile; and amusement, directed at Arthur Penberthy, amounts to sacrilege. Arthur sees a subtler emotion in her eyes; but he is an anatomist; he cannot identify it.

"Grind your teeth, Arthur," Mary suggests. "Gnash them."

"It was impertinent," he says. The matter, obviously, ends there.

### III.

A half-hour later the disaster had occurred. He required reassurance that the hand of Arthur Penberthy had been refused. Recklessness, in such prodigality, was not credible; it appeared nevertheless to exist. He would tolerate no coquetry. None, he learned, was intended. She was not flirtatiously enhancing her attractiveness. She was, with measured judgment, if such folly might be called judgment, refusing the Penberthy table and the further endowments.

She had had sufficient intimation. If such insanity had been her intent from the first, had she not owed him some sign of it? She had not, she informed him, dared to believe that so much was prepared for her. He understood that. He could not understand, recurring to the initial madness, her refusal. He could scarcely understand that the hand of a Penberthy, of Arthur Penberthy, had been refused. It lacked conviction; it went against sense. He reflected that he had possibly overvalued her store of sense. The world was free for women to act injudiciously. Still, it was hardly free to humiliate him.

He turned Albert-Edward toward Springfield. If he could have foreseen such a denouement he would have chosen a shorter course. But how could he have foreseen it? A discovery of further treason awaited him. He suggested, from the frigidity he had retired into, the possibility of a belated, a certainly too late, awakening.

"I hardly think so," Mary said. "You see, Tom and I—Tom Wallace—are going to be married in October."

"Do you mean," Arthur pulled Albert-Edward to a halt, under the necessity of speaking severely, "that you have been—that you have kept this back from me all the time? Do you realize how dishonorable—why didn't you tell me?"

"Why should I? What business was it of yours? Besides, I'm rather flattered to be able, Arthur, to suggest to you—if it's possible—that other men may be more desirable than you."

He retired into the silence, permanently. Before they reached Springfield the setting sun plunged into a bank of clouds that turned it carmine. The flat light on trees and grass gave them an unusual color. The tint stayed in Arthur Penberthy's mind. It was unusual for grass and trees, but he had seen it in quantity elsewhere. It filled the landscape, the detestable world, with a color significant to surgeons, the color of blood.

### IV.

Scrutinized, surgery is but little higher in the scale of intelligent work than automobile repairing. The qualities which go to make a Hartford machinist eminent in his trade, if subtilized a little and diligently employed, would carry him to the eminence of Arthur Penberthy. The estate at Brookline would not have succeeded the Penberthy acres of Springfield if it had depended on the intelligence required by a second rate physician or a fourth rate neurologist. Healing was beyond Arthur Penberthy. He repaired.

From the first it was certain that he would go far. Simply, Arthur Penberthy must go far. Yet the possible distance was increased by Tom Wallace's residence in Springfield, which made Springfield uninhabitable. Arthur Penberthy, when his various internships were completed, turning over the succession to a younger son for the first time in history, stayed on in Boston, where it was possible to go far.

The career of Arthur Penberthy is not relevant. It began even in the Massachusetts General, where he was discreet enough to do spectacular things casually. It continued through various stages—a half dozen honorary degrees, a presidency of the Association, an operation on a President of the United States with reporters in double files for a mile away from the operating room, a summons to lecture at the London college—stages that are recorded in the proper journals. The journals do not record his marriage, in 1901, to one who might be considered another stage, nor the house on Commonwealth Avenue, its abandonment, the estate of freer access at Brookline. Nor, ultimately, are these germane.

Many watched him; a few, fellow internes or later associates, closely. A few wondered. Penberthy, at forty-five, was great. A dozen historic operations and the Penberthy aortic suture witnessed so much. The London lectures, whoever may have written them, and the book that was made of them were to come. By fifty-five he was an institution, as much a boast of provincial newspapers as Thomas A. Edison or Yellowstone Park. Those who knew him watched and it



followed that they talked. Scandal, one observes, accretes to all those whose heads rear above the herd, scandal which may be vicarious or altogether random. Certainly in his public life, in whatever of his private life was accessible, in his face and figure, nothing justified it. Penberthy's face at fifty-five was just what it had been at twenty-five, massive, not alert, too simple for decadence, too egocentric for whatever vices irreverence might hint at.

No irreverence might attend his surgery. The ice of Penberthy's temperament, the very fact that his intelligence was less fine than that of many colleagues, led him in simplicity to what passed for miracle. Cowardice, the imagination that kept better men from his distinction, was too complex an emotion for him to feel. Into the brain or the heart he went, when it was necessary to go, because that was the indicated path and he had no time for possibilities. The aortic suture was only a way to get a millimetre nearer the heart. It was bloody, but the millimetre might bridge the gap between death and life.

A few remarked that he would rather operate on women than on men. Records perhaps would not bear them out. It may be that women brought him more spectacular problems, or it may be that their gratitude advertised him. His miracles, at least, were usually performed on children — as when a special train brought him, the width of the continent, the son of a personage, whose crushed knee Penberthy rebuilt with steel and wood as he might have remodeled a country lodge. A superintendent who witnessed the operation found it more than even his calloused nerves might bear. He left the room before the operation was done. He had only two impressions — one a realization that all the fees he would assess in his lifetime would not equal this one of Penberthy's, the other a picture of Penberthy up to his slippers in gauze swabs, fresh swab in hand, watching intently the slow welling of blood along the edges of a bone.

Perhaps the students saw him best, when on rare days he would appear in the amphitheatre. Nowhere else was he a talker. Here he became verbose. He discussed ligatures and stitches and scalpels, needles and anaesthetics, pathologies and microscopes, reminiscences too. To such an audience he was a great man; full of eccentricities, not entitled to their reverence, but supreme. Nothing escaped them. Only the students ascribed to anything but care his practice of handling all ligatures himself. Only the students noticed his habit, confirmed by thirty years, of taking with him from the table a small piece, sometimes only a shred, of blood-stained gauze.

They, the students, perhaps saw him more clearly than his wife could. She had her place in his life and, in a way, her function; but that she was to see deeply into his heart or was in any way to be troubled about it had not been understood in their marriage. It is likely that she perceived, behind his solemnity and grandeur, the nakedness of an unhappy man. But there was no reason why that should matter greatly, and assuredly she had no call to alleviate it.

She suspected, too, that the unhappy man had his own gratifications. She did not dare. She could not decently resent

eccentricity. He was scrupulously private, objectively a gentleman. Beyond that—well, what?

## V.

Audience with Arthur Penberthy was surrounded with formality. Not even for a Senator whose name was mentioned for the Cabinet would the ceremonies be abated. After the full ritual, Senator Wallace reached the presence-chamber. It was done in blue and gold, much in the manner of music rooms. Through a door furtively open one saw porcelain and nickel-plated steel, through opposite windows a corner of Boston sky and the higher leaves of elms in Bay State Road—a conjunction of health and surgery of more than accidental symbolism. The Senator, however, was not one to dwell on symbols. His visit had an object; as the chairman of Ways and Means he approached it unequivocally.

Arthur Penberthy had not seen Mary Wallace again. He had heard her name no more than a dozen times, and then always in conjunction with her husband's—a reception in Washington, a carefully unofficial stay in Europe, a swing round the circle when a Republican President looked to his tenses. The rise of Tom Wallace was predicable on his father, the Ambassador, and on the state capitol at Springfield. On the whole, Penberthy, when he reflected, felt at ease in the implied comparison. He would have resented only the Presidency, and the rumors which sometimes selected Tom Wallace for that dignity might be dismissed as political skirmishing, about which Penberthy knew nothing. Even if they should mature the Back Bay had thought him the proper classification of Presidents. No, he could concede Mary no equal distinction; nothing, for instance, like the London lectures. Senators, even one mentioned for the Cabinet or the Presidency, were commonplace people; mediocrity indeed would seem to be a condition of their existence.

She was now, after thirty-five years, abruptly projected into his life. For the first time he was free to think about her. It appeared that there was an ulcer. At the gate of the pylorus, Morrison said, and Morrison's diagnosis would be microscopically accurate. An exquisite operation in the most favorable circumstances, it was specially hazardous in Mary's case. There had been a lesion there some years ago. Doubtless the present trouble came from the lesion, Morrison said. The present growth was cancerous. If it could be promptly removed, Morrison said . . . if not—cancer. Morrison's business went no further.

"Doctor Morrison sent you to me?" Penberthy inquired. By convention he must be cold; his nature supported the tradition; there was perhaps reason for additional frigidity.

The Senator had been mentioned for the Cabinet. "He said that there were only two men in the country, you and a Doctor Levy in New York. It was a situation that required candor. At our request he recommended you."

Mary then—and her husband—had hesitated. Morrison would never, except by request, have mentioned Levy in the same breath. "There must be an examination", he said. His secretary would make that possible.



He had anticipated the examination with a vague uneasiness. Something buried deeply suggested that he might be disturbed, suggested an unsurgeon-like, un-Penbertherian distress. The apprehension proved spurious. Mary had a moment of reminiscence for him, which he ignored. She was as meaningless as a guinea-pig from the laboratory. As a case she roused his interest. Observation at the hospital verified him. Miracle, his reputation, was called for.

Through nearly a week Arthur Penberthy found himself looking forward, pleasurably, to the operation. Pride of craft had long since become routine to him, and whatever difficulties faced him were to be met as they arose; in years an operation had not been on his mind beforehand. This one, however, seemed always present on the margin, sometimes in the center of his mind. He saw the table in the pit, under the ground-glass dome; Mary's figure, swathed in sheets except for a small triangle of abdomen, was on it; under the swathings her breast moved with the accelerated breathing of the anaesthetized. He saw himself entering the pit with alacrity, with a step more juvenile than his years. He recalled, too, bits of landscape hard to identify — a macadam road toward evening, the smells of autumn, a misty red sun and its glow on the grass.

He had never quite known exaltation. For the first time in his life it broke over him while he was putting on his robes and sterilizing his hands. A mirror gave him the unprecedented brilliance of his eyes, a faintly voluptuous smile on his lips. It was just as well, he reflected, considering the colleagues who had gathered to watch the operation, that he was to wear a gauze mask. However agreeably surprising the new emotion, he had no desire to surprise them. The twenty paces to the amphitheatre set his legs trembling. His mind was far from clear. It was suffused with a drowsy ecstatic languor. He seemed in the presence of invisible color, inaudible

music. It was, he decided as he turned to an assistant for the first scalpel, almost a nuptial excitement.

His mind, for practical purposes, cleared at once. A minute focus of consciousness centered on his business. Thirty-five years, two thousand operations, guided him. He was sure that Arthur Penberthy, miracle-worker, was justifying himself, astonishing his peers. But behind the focus — chaos. As he made the first incision a prolonged voluptuous shudder agitated him. It subsided. Minor ecstasies followed. For an hour and forty minutes he existed in an imaginative, a superb country whose existence he had never suspected.

The surgeons who looked on, inasmuch as they witnessed another Penberthy miracle, felt little right to be critical. In the presence of miracle ordinary criteria were inept. None of them, in the first place, would have dared the operation. Yet — if they had — none would have dared to be so deliberate, to stay so long. And, trained to be parsimonious of blood, none would have risked so much hemorrhage. Penberthy, however, as a thaumaturge, was entitled to his methods.

Arthur Penberthy, immediately after he had again assumed the clothes of a civilian, was driven to his offices in Bay State Road. Physically he was exhausted, but in some strange new way he felt lighter, more refreshed than he could remember ever feeling before. Arrived at the suite, he characteristically made a note for his secretary, instructing him that this morning's fee would be in accord with a Senator's position.

When the door of the blue and gold room was closed behind him, he swept clear the glass top of his desk. From his card-case he extracted a fresh piece of blood-stained gauze. This — this gauze — the blood not quite dry, Mary's blood, he put on the desk. He sat looking at it, occasionally touching a finger to it — for the first time in his life a happy man.



## The Old Chief

BY HAL BORLAND

Standing in the frayed twilight  
He stretches smoky fingers over the Purple Hills  
    and down long swales,  
Caressing them and soothing the rough face of the plains.  
His mid-night eyes warm  
And the hard lips smile  
As the long fingers filter the evening cool  
And soothe the scorched hilltops.

A whisper ripples the valley grass :

"They took you, Old Plains,  
And they call you theirs —  
But you are mine, Purple Hills,  
You are still mine,  
And you will be mine forever  
Despite their plantings  
And their harvestings  
And their civilization.  
My moon lights your nights,  
My sun burns your face,  
My sand storms and my blizzards whip you and  
    tear you and bury you :  
And my spirit,  
Ah, my spirit always is over you.  
You are mine, Old Plains,  
Always mine!"

The whisper hovers over a shadowy water-hole,  
Then dies like a sigh on the hill tops.

Throwing back his grey robes  
The chief spreads his arms,  
Clasps this hill and that to his body  
And buries his face in the valley coolness.

The blue-stem in the treeless river valleys continues  
    to whisper,  
"Mine, always mine."



## Two Poems

BY CHAIM N. BIALIK

### THE HOUSE OF ETERNITY

The oaks in silence nodded, mutely they said:  
Rest in our shade; beneath us rot, thou man.  
This monument and this little span  
Of earth will end your grief and dread.  
Instead of dying sluggishly, die  
At once, and cease your noise. With little ado  
We'll make eternal provision for you.  
We'll share with the worm your body equally.  
For ceaselessly new life wells forth from all:  
You'll bloom as flower or be wrought into wood,  
You'll live in all no matter what you be.  
Come beneath us, thing of flesh and blood!  
Thus mutely nodded the oaks; and withal  
These speechless monuments they pitied me.

*Translated from the Hebrew by Hayim Fineman.*

### TONIGHT I WAITED

Tonight I waited near your room;  
I saw you stand apart.  
You stared out into the night,  
Seeking your lost heart.

Seeking your childhood love again;  
And you did not see, as you took wing,  
Like a pigeon calling to its mate  
My heart was hovering.

*Translated from the Hebrew by Leo Auerbach  
and Joseph T. Shipley.*



## Introducing the Artist

This note on Boris Deutch, as an explanation of the man and his work, is an appreciation of a vital artist, profoundly emotional. It is possible not to understand that power, but impossible not to feel it.

The spirit of the man is so closely bound with all his artistic achievements, that to study him becomes as absorbing as to study his work; and indeed, is necessary, if we are to know his emotional reactions and impulses that bear his creations.

Any sketch, such as this, can, I am afraid, give only an incomplete picture of an emotion so profound. But it serves to point out the main lights of the workings of the man, an artist powerful in achievement, and great in the possibilities of development.

Boris Deutch was born (1895) in Krasnogorkow, Russia. He studied, for a short time, at the Bloom Academy of Fine Arts at Riga. Later he studied in Berlin Academies. Except for these few years of haphazard academic training, the course of Deutch has been an independent one. Academies have left no visible influence in his work, other than, as is true in so many cases, leaving a mark of revolt in the man, and an incentive for creative originality. He is remembered as one of the group of Independents whose exhibition, the first of its kind in the West, created a stir not so long ago. But even that affiliation was one of necessity rather than any spiritual affinity.

His technique is dictated by his mood and subject. None of his paintings are created for the purpose of exploiting any one form of art. His subjects are created from within and executed when expression becomes imperative. This method, which, in reality, is a necessity, is the only possible one to a man of Deutch's temperament; and gives his work that unusual profoundness that is the distinction of all great art.

Deutch is a master of Line and Color. In his hands they become the chief tools that give body and spirit to his work. An illustration of this genius can be noticed, in "The Perushim." Color, in its more brilliant aspects, is absent from this canvas. Deutch, utilizing a few curved lines, which, on the surface of things, would seem an easy procedure, has created

a spiritual rhythmic symphony. Were it not for the obvious religious and spiritual motives of the canvas it would properly be called "Rhythm". Technically it is a study in rhythm.

Deutch's canvases, for that reason, can be likened to musical compositions. There are the motives of technique harmonizing with the main motive of the theme. But Deutch is master of his brush to such startling degree, that when one studies his canvases all suggestions of a brilliant technician become insignificant beside the more spiritual creative motives.

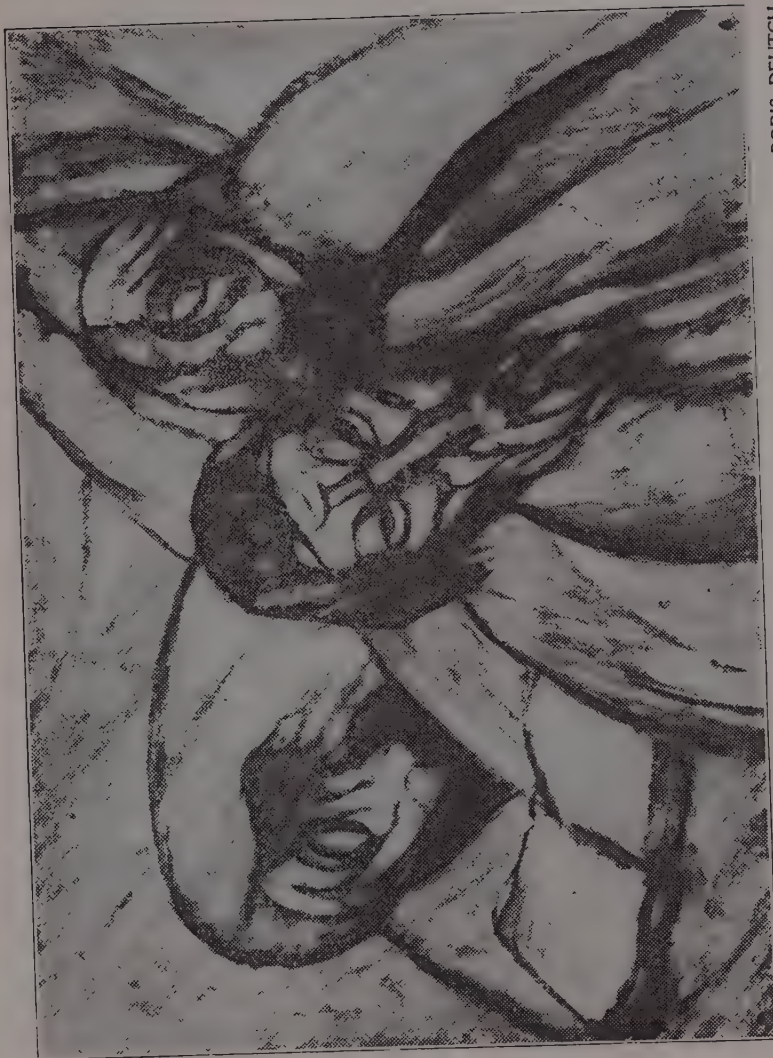
It is true, and Deutch himself frequently admits it, that he is a slave to color, a riotous fulfillment of chaste and unchaste desires and expressions, frequently bordering on obsession; but, and Deutch would probably deny this, a slave to color, in its abilities in his hands, as a moderate spiritual confession. This expression, of course, is applied to Color, concrete in meaning, but abstract in our thought of it; abstract in the sense of fulfillment possible in the hands of a genius. But Deutch's work and experiments with it are, and undoubtedly will be, another medium to utilize his own peculiar and profound creativeness. It will never become an obsession.

In the domain of the satirical, Deutch is distinguished from other artists, like Epstein, a colossus in sculpture; like Ben Hecht, who has achieved in literature, in that his satire has none of the sting of these men. The impulse that prompts his satire is unlike the impulses of these men. In the painting "Gossip" Deutch has created clear and outstanding characters. The satire is dominated by the spirit of fun and laughter, with the sure touch for the understanding of human nature, and achieves the same degree of power for the apparent purposes of the artist.

These same characteristics dominate his purely racial and religious canvases. His Jewish mothers and daughters, Rabbis and Talmidim, are colored with the brooding of the man himself. His Jew is the wandering Jew, the prosecuted Jew. He must be ranked among the living artists who, devoid of any sentimentality, picture the sufferings of a race in profound ecstasy.

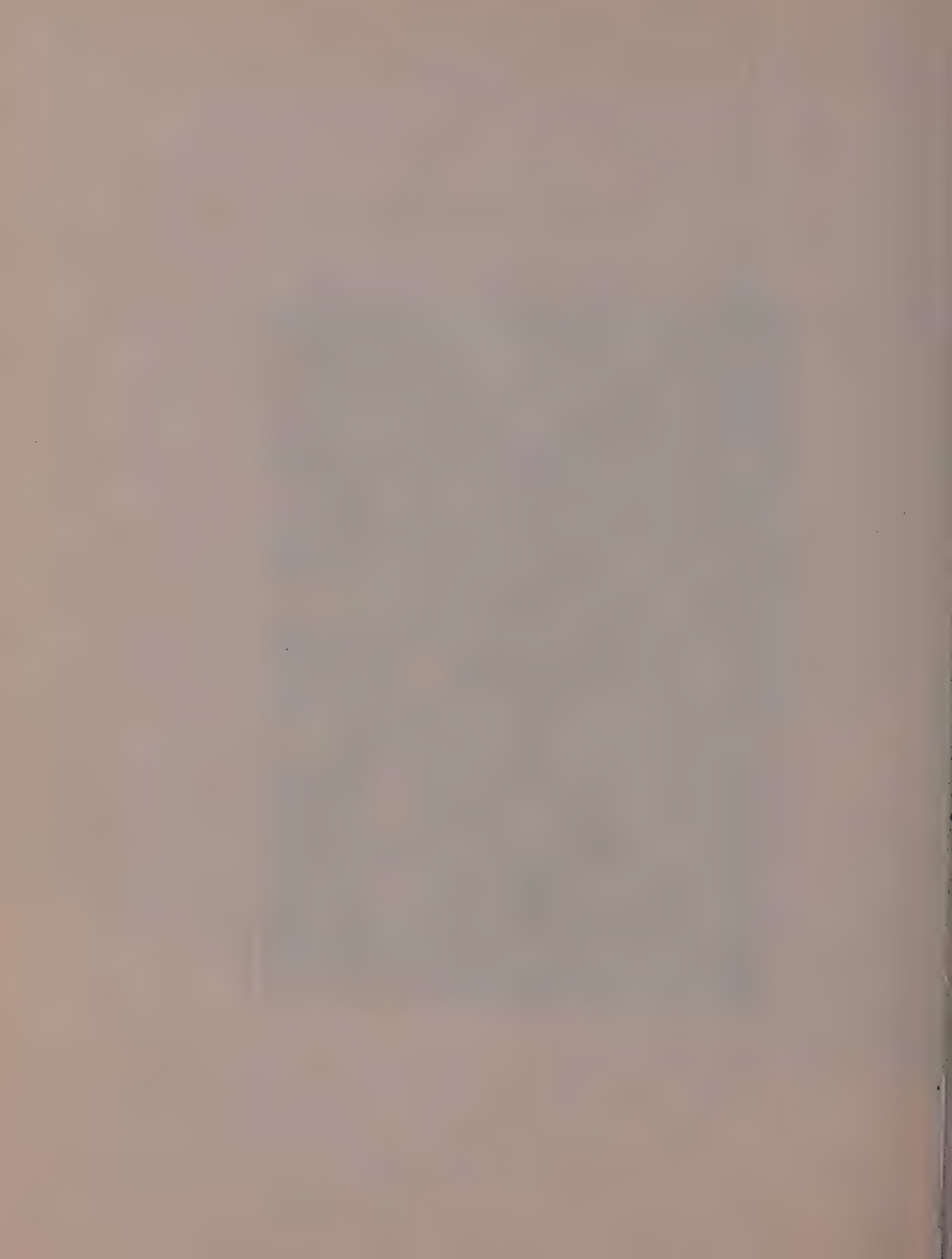
David N. Grokowsky.





BORIS DEUTCH

“PERUSHIM”







GOSSIP

BORIS DEUTCH





# Spinoza and Bergson

(A Parallel)

BY WILLIAM NATHANSON \*)

## I.

In all the comparisons between Spinoza and Bergson that have been made heretofore, the emphasis, so far as I know, has been laid on the contrast between the Spinozan and Bergsonian views of the relations between God, man and the world.

What interests us much more here, however, is the points where the two great philosophers agree. This similarity between them, which lies deep, deep beneath their differences, interests us all the more compellingly, here, because in this similarity we see the expression of the Jewish spirit, which was embodied in its two sons, although one is so far removed from the other in time and place, in the impressions and influences under which they grew up and developed.

One of the characteristics of the Spinozan philosophy which sets it apart from all other philosophies is the concept of immanence. None of the philosophers before Spinoza and none after him insisted so strongly as he did on monistic spiritualism. There was none who stood so firmly for the idea that it is a one and only spiritual reality, a single, self-causing substance, a unique, absolutely infinite being — in brief, a one, eternal, absolute, perfect and infinite God which fills and comprehends the whole universe.

By his expression "*Deus sive Natura*" Spinoza wanted it clearly and explicitly understood that every stir, every movement, every event and every appearance that can be received by our senses, or conceived by our thought is a part, or an aspect, or an attribute, or a *modus*, of one and the same substance. And substance is nothing other than the self-causing, eternal, all-occupying godliness, or the all-comprehending and all-including God.

Everything in the world, and the world or nature as the whole of which man is a part, is encased, like the body within its skin, in substance, which is what everybody understands by the expression God.

Spinoza did not bring God, the Creator and prime mover of the world, from outside the world into it. On the contrary he transposed the whole world and all nature as it is comprehended by the human spirit into substance, which is, in a sense, a super-nature. Everything which surrounds man in his every-

day actuality and in his most festive fantasy, is, together with man himself, only a thread in the eternal web of godlines.

The world or nature, and everything in it are, thus, not a creation or an expression of God, but only a part or an aspect of Him.

This is the meaning of such sentences in the "*Ethics*" as these:

Besides God no substance can be granted or conceived.

Whatsoever is, is in God, and without God nothing can be, or be conceived.

Nothing in the universe is contingent, but all things are conditioned to exist and operate in a particular manner by the necessity of the divine nature.

The intellectual love of the mind toward God is that very love of God, whereby God loves himself, not in so far as he is infinite, but in so far as he can be explained through the essence of the human mind regarded under the form of eternity; in other words, the intellectual love of the mind toward God is part of the infinite love, wherewith God loves himself.

On this immanence the philosopher Bergson also depends. He, too, represents the cosmos, the all-comprehending universe, in the form of a one and only spiritual energy. Outside of this universal, spiritual force there is nothing except a free, unspatial future, in which the universe endures.

Bergson's concept of the relation between matter and spirit is not the same as Spinoza's.

Spinoza saw in matter a different aspect of the world-substance, which runs parallel to spiritual aspect of the same substance. Bergson sees in matter a relaxation of the world spirit or world-substance, a moment of distraction amidst the creative moments, which are concentrated and rapt.

With this concept Bergson has only strengthened the monism in immanence. For his picture of the relation between matter and spirit, much more than Spinoza's picture, makes conceivable and possible the transformation of matter and spirit into a single fountain of super-spirit from which both spirit and matter spring. And super-spirit means more than spirit at the moment of highest intensity, at the moment when

\*) Translated from the Yiddish by David Wollins.

the creative effort of the universal power reaches its tensest concentration and fullness.

This strong monism, which in its spiritual aspect must be immanent, or contrarily, this immanence which comes to its fullest expression in monistic spiritualism, this, it seems, is a product, and a further development and deepening of the Jewish spirit.

Of all the cultural expressions the ethical expression of culture has most strongly shown itself in the Jewish people. And no other expression of culture like the ethical one drives the individual so forcefully to an intimate relation with the highest force in the world. There is no other expression which so compellingly as the ethical, strengthens in man the feeling that every stir and movement of his self, his every conscious step, must have meaning, value and significance. Nothing can give human deeds so much meaning, significance, and value as a concrete relation between man and the reality of the world; and nothing can so much make of a man a truly worthy self as the feeling that man is at one with God, that man and all around him is within God, and that only a truly ethical elevation, a truly spiritual deepening and strengthening on the part of the individual can lead to any kind of understanding or communion between the human self and the self of God.

Hence this "ethicism", as it might be called, is also responsible for the concrete and natural character which the "knowing God" assumes with the Jewish people. To speak with God, to see him face to face, requires nothing less than moral wholeness and ethical purity. Man need only carry himself on the wings of his imagination into the highest heavens in order to meet the lord of all worlds. Not bodily, but only spiritually, not in a concrete sense but only metaphorically; but leave the earth man must, if he would see God's purity, and sense his greatness and glory, and commune with him in such manner as to arrive at the meaning and purpose of the world, and the value of human life.

Hence philosophical absolutism in epistemological form came to perhaps its strongest expression in the two greatest Jewish philosophers — Spinoza and Bergson.

Here we come to another characteristic which unites Spinozism to Bergsonism. Both Spinoza and Bergson assume that the reality of the world can be conceived in its absoluteness by the individual.

True, God, from Spinoza's viewpoint, is infinite and therefore has an infinite number of attributes of which we know only two. And these are spatial extension or matter, and unspatial mentality or spirit. God's being, however, whose characteristics are absoluteness, infiniteness and eternity, find its expression in each and every attribute of God. Again, man is capable, if he very much wants to, to conceive the world in the form of eternity, and this characteristic of eternity includes within it, of course, the characteristics of absoluteness and infiniteness. And hence it follows that at certain moments man can know God's presence or the reality of the world in an absolute manner.

All that is required for absolute communion with Reality

is, according to both Spinoza and Bergson, the concentration of the individual upon his own inner self: a withdrawal from the outside world with its tumult and confusion, with its transient practicalness and passing utility.

And who can really withdraw himself into the inner world, in which the enduring takes the place of the transitory, speculation the place of practicalness, the valuable the place of the useful; who can with adequate tenseness plumb the depths of his own self or lift himself to the highest degree of his spirituality — he becomes dominated by the foremost and profoundest knowledge through which reality reveals itself.

Both Spinoza and Bergson call this knowledge intuitive knowledge. It is this intuitive knowledge which brings man to the core of reality, fuses him with it and enables him to sense the pulse of the universal spirit in its entire absoluteness.

Spinoza was not the first to introduce the concept of intuition. Already in Socrates we have an indication of it, and in Plotinus the idea is brought out in a broad, profound manner. Spinoza was the first, however, to tear all manner of mysterious veils from intuition and to place it in a very clear and rational manner above the understanding and the ratio. And Bergson was the first of the philosophers after Spinoza to bring intuition back into the philosophical arena. Even more than Spinoza did he succeed in establishing intuition upon a purely scientific basis and in making it the *sine qua non* of metaphysics. At the same time Bergson does not carry intuition beyond the bounds of possibility of any human being who is at all capable of spiritual tenseness and introspection.

Bergson lets intuition strike its roots in the instincts of living creatures. In the very instinctive knowledge Bergson sees a profoundness which by far outwards the profundity of any rational or logical knowledge. Logic or reason has helped man to extend his knowledge rather than to deepen it. But this very extension of logical knowledge has transformed instinctive into intuitive knowledge. Intuitive knowledge thus became of such a kind as originates at the moment when all the expressions of the human spirit are alloyed—when the will fuses with the emotions and both these — with the reason. All these three, moreover, yield man a sensing or a vision which none of them alone can give.

This sensing or vision creates an artistic or metaphysical insight into reality which can in a thousand ways be broadened by the study of logic, and of science that operates through knowledge, but which can itself be created by no logic and by no science.

All profound views into reality that have revealed the secrets of nature to man, have, according to Bergson, come in an intuitive manner. All they, however, who have devoted themselves to thinking of the world as a whole, who wanted to discover the origin and final purpose of the universe, they have not been sufficiently conscious of the power of intuition which was effective in them. All that Bergson asks is that men should become more conscious of the intuitive power. That consciousness will strengthen and urge on intuition; and in consequence artistic imagination and metaphysical speculation will both soar, and together with them — the cultural sphere of man in general.

(To be continued.)



# Mr. MacDonald and the British Election

BY HERMAN SILVERMAN

## I.

When the Labor Government came into power, it was prophesied that the new Ministry would last only six months. A minority party in the House of Commons, Labor, among other things, had to face the problem of gaining the good-will and active co-operation of the Liberal group in Parliament. Without the support of Mr. Herbert Asquith and Mr. Lloyd George it would have been impossible for the Labor Cabinet to remain in office a single day. But instead of seeking an understanding with the Liberals, Mr. MacDonald utilized every opportunity to estrange and antagonize them. "Labor desires none of us": complains the *Manchester Guardian*. "It repudiates our support. Its object, quite openly and unaffectedly, is to compass our destruction, and it sees no road to its own ultimate success except over our dead bodies." The Labor Government, in spite of its hostility to the Liberals, held office for nine months and would have been still functioning had Mr. MacDonald desired to continue. The Liberals did not want an election and Mr. MacDonald took advantage of the Campbell affair to force it upon them. The Prime Minister could have accepted the conditions imposed by the Liberal amendment which called for the establishment of a Select Committee to investigate the procedure of the Government's case against Mr. Campbell. The Labor Government was in the minority and had already "accepted many defeats on more important issues."

It was not the Campbell imbroglio nor the fear for the future of the Russian Treaty that forced the Ministry to resign from office. The Liberal amendment gave them the opportunity to escape from the first difficulty without the loss of prestige or dignity. The other problem presented greater complications, but an agreement upon even this point was not impossible. The National Liberal Federation, meeting at Brighton on May 22, 1924, carried and indorsed the following resolution:—"That the restoration of Russia is essential to European prosperity and calls for the sincere and active co-operation of the British Government and of the British people, provided that she recognizes her obligation, and that any loans which may come from this country should be applied, not to military, but to productive purposes." Liberals supported the recognition of the Soviet Government, and declared themselves in favor of establishing commercial relations with Russia. They directed their opposition not against the Treaty proper, but against the principle of guaranteeing loans to foreign Governments. "Such loans—says the Nation and Athenaeum—represent an essentially vicious principle. They necessarily throw a heavy risk upon the British taxpayer for if there were not such a risk a loan could

easily be floated without any guarantee. They involve the subsidizing of what experience shows to be the most precarious of all forms of foreign investment—namely, loans to Governments . . . . It is, moreover, very dangerous to place the Governments of different sovereign States in the position of creditor or debtor to one another. A default which, in the case of privately raised loans, concerns only the unlucky investors becomes in the case of a guaranteed loan an inevitable source of international discord . . . . Moreover, the British Government accepts for the first time in our history the principle that the credit of the British tax payer should be used to secure compensation for those who have made bad investments in foreign countries. It is extraordinary that this principle should be accepted by a Government representing a party which has constantly held bondholders up to public execration. Those who lent money to the Russian Government before the war did so at their own risk, and they have no right to expect that the British tax payer should now bribe the Soviet Government to pay them partial compensation."

The Liberal Party is not against a treaty with Russia, and the English merchant is perhaps more anxious than Mr. MacDonald to find a new market for his products. Had the Russian delegates shown a greater sincerity in their promises to honour the debts contracted under the former regime, had they offered reasonable security to make the loan more attractive to the international banker, a guarantee, such as they have demanded, would not have been necessary. This should have been made clear to the Russians at the very beginning of the Conference. Mr. MacDonald should have never compromised on this point. Had he taken the Liberals into his confidence, he would have been able to negotiate a treaty acceptable to all parties. The Prime Minister, however, pursued a lonely course, and widened the gulf between himself and the leaders of the Liberal group. His treaty with the Russian Soviets would have been defeated by a large majority. Of that there can be no doubt. But his defeat would not have necessitated the resignation of the Labor Government. The negotiations could have been reopened and a compromise reached. Mr. MacDonald decided not to wait for the result of the Parliamentary debate on the Russian treaty. The Campbell affair gave him the opportunity he desired. He forced the dissolution of Parliament in the midst of a session whose sole business was to be a discussion of the Ulster Boundary question.

## II.

Labor came to the election without an issue. There was no outstanding feature in the Labor program that would differentiate it from those of the other parties. The Capital

Levy had completely vanished: what remained was vague and ambiguous. Labor could point with pride to the progress made in the general pacification of Europe, and to Mr. Snowden's budgetary reductions, but had least to show in the field of social and industrial reform. "Its election pledges about unemployment remain unfulfilled, the great housing campaign never developed, the wheels of industry have not been made to revolve with new energy . . ." Such is the comment of the friendly Irish Statesman. Mr. MacDonald's failure in the realm of domestic legislation can be ascribed only in part to the Parliamentary weakness of his party. Had Labor been in the majority one doubts whether they would have accomplished much more. "Labor leaders may still cherish visions of building Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land, but they are now aware that the process will be slower and more painful than it appeared in the days when other hands controlled the levers, and their job was limited to criticizing the result. It is less a question of changing systems than of transforming human nature, and even the Lenins and Mussolinis, however relentlessly they hack and hew to clear a space upon which to build according to an entirely new design, are not long in discovering that, little as they may like it, much of the old will survive and must be dovetailed into the new owing to the invincible opposition of the mass of mankind to being lifted too speedily out of the familiar ruts." This is as true as it is fundamental, but one wonders whether the rank and file of the Labor Party are as aware of it as are Mr. MacDonald and the members of his former Cabinet.

The manifesto of the Conservative Party was just as vague and ambiguous. The general tariff had been sidetracked for the moment, and the chief emphasis laid upon the Safeguarding of the Industries Act and the development of trade by measures of Imperial Preference. For something more substantial and more promising the progressive reader must turn to the program of the Liberal Party. The Liberals have worked out an interesting policy of land reform, a scheme of educational advance for a period of ten years, and also promised to secure "a real correspondence between Parliamentary representation and electoral strength." They are opposed to the principle of the guaranteed loan, but are in favor of reaching an agreement with Russia. They come out strongly against any form of a protectionist tariff and against the policy of building up a system of Imperial Preference.

Mr. MacDonald has been severely criticized for not appearing before the country with a distinct Labor issue. The importance of the Russian Treaty as a factor in the revival of British trade and industry has been greatly exaggerated. In

1913 Russia took only 3 per cent of the English exports, "even when it included Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland." At first glance, then, it must appear ridiculous that Mr. MacDonald would stake the existence of his Government upon an issue of minor importance. A closer examination of the facts, however, shows that Mr. MacDonald's sudden decision to resign is not as rash as it seems to appear. The Labor Government could not exist without the support of the Liberals, and could not co-operate with them unless it repudiated its own program. An editorial in the Manchester Guardian Weekly of October 24th, puts the matter bluntly. "The Government need not have died; they died only because they were unwilling to go on living on the only condition possible—that of Liberal support. That is a perfectly intelligible and not in itself in any way discreditable reason for provoking an election; it happens also in this case to be the true one." Mr. MacDonald realizes that the Liberal Party is in his way, and that it must be removed before Labor could stage its final combat with the Conservatives. He has a vision of a two party system, of a country divided in its allegiance between the Tories on one hand and Labor on the other. The Liberals must be swallowed by these two: those of the Right will go to the Conservatives, those of the Left to Labor. The sooner this happens the better. Mr. MacDonald forced the election upon them because he knew that they were unprepared and would suffer the greatest losses. His vision proved to be prophetic. The Liberal minority in Parliament has been reduced to a negligible quantity—to about 6 per cent of the whole. True, "Labor lost 40 seats in the Commons, but a million more people voted Labor than did so last time—35 per cent of the total number of votes as compared with 31 per cent in 1923". A representative system corresponding more closely to electoral strength would have eaten into the Tory majority, and would have added considerably to the strength of the minority parties; but Mr. MacDonald did not support the measure for electoral reform which the Liberals have introduced in the last Parliament. The present electoral methods worked fairly well under the old two party system; but the two party system has gone forever. Labor must realize, sooner or later, the importance of Parliamentary reform even though the Liberals are benefited by it.

Mr. MacDonald has shown himself to be a Parliamentary tactician of first rank, and a very capable party leader as well. He has declared open warfare against the Liberal Party and will take advantage of every opportunity to bring about its ultimate destruction. The present manoeuvre marks the opening of Mr. MacDonald's campaign against Liberalism; whether his policy will prove successful is quite another matter.



# EXCURSIONS

To a fibrous participant in the developing art of America the spirit of "earnest mischief" is irresistible. The playfulness of an art is — The Rambler believes — its sustenance. He does not mean the bludgeon-wit of those who lambast immediate banalities with a vehemence out of all proportion to their ultimate significance. But a playfulness born of a radio-active intelligence and intuition, or a playfulness born of balanced ironic conceptions, or a playfulness of rhythmic continence. The first is a succession almost breathless of swelling currents, the second of poisoning threads and tilting several threads to a common apex, the third a linear thread.

\* \* \*

Among the earliest of contemporary mischiefs was Alfred Kreymborg. Mr. Kreymborg was the first fully-equipped poet to convert the mechanics of fantoccini into the devices of poetry. The Rambler has felt always that the puppet-show is entirely incompatible with what is usually known as "serious". It is angular in its rhythms and belongs to a two-dimensional world moving in one direction at a time. Mr. Kreymborg has been noteworthy in his perception of the potentialities of this straight-line mischief, and has written verse that moves from shoulder to elbow, from elbow to wrist, from wrist to finger-tips . . . and similarly. And what is of principal importance is that Mr. Kreymborg has always heretofore suited his matter to his means. Essentially the "shortest line between two points" rhythm is the rhythm of caricature, "a needle thickness granting dominions fat as summer caterpillars"

(to quote The Rambler). And this thin-threading is Mr. Kreymborg at his best. He is, after all, Dickens, not Browning.

And here we are at Mr. Kreymborg's latest work. There is a good deal of the Kreymborg of the "shortest line" mischief (this is in fact his resemblance to a child) in "Less Lonely", and in no poem is it entirely absent. But there are evidences that the author has tried to force a three-dimension contemplation into a two-dimension form. And stranger still do his gestures appear garbed in the sombre garb of the sonnet, though one must admit they do achieve a degree of that peculiar fascination that is forever Kreymborg.\*)

Evidently loneliness weighed heavily on Mr. Kreymborg. To be "rained in" in the solitude of Maggiore, when one is, as Mr. Kreymborg reveals himself, metropolitan to the core, brings the soporifics of *anschauung*. But one's nature will not be denied. Mischief he is and mischief he remains. Therefore even in the jacket of a *fourteener*, the body of mischief still is succulent, as this phrase shows: "The lines of her wary body." A phrase—to call upon George Douglas—to make "the teeth water."

\*) LESS LONELY, by Alfred Kreymborg. New York: Harcourt Brace.

Among the born mischiefs is Donald Davidson, a poet of fine integrity. Mr. Davidson's limitation is not one of ability but rather one of environment. He is, as every inch of his writing indicates, of the new poets. It is very easy to label what is in reality a salutary skepticism as "cynicism". But such label convicts only the labeler.\*\*)

Mr. Davidson is a modern in his approach, a mischief in his treatment, but he is not wholly cognizant of the nature of his gifts. It seems he has not taken the time to understand his talent, so that he does not devise measures that best suit his mischief. He seems to take for granted his medium, with no indications of previous experimentation.

The Rambler feels that there is a world looking over Mr. Davidson's shoulders and it is a tight world. There is no indication of that trial and error process that gives vivacity and color to literature, and throbbing conviction ultimately when the time has come for it. The danger of not having taken chances is that growth may be cut off suddenly.

The Rambler believes in Mr. Davidson's ability. Certainly there is no hollowness in his work, it has the quality of a mind austere in its mischief. It is because of his belief in Mr. Davidson that The Rambler is concerned.

\* \* \*

The phenomenal growth in America to an understanding of writing as a literary hurries to a sturdy fruition. The stage has for some few years realized that a velvet drop in the rear may better connote luxury than all the pasteboard duplicates available. Recently, as against the word for word copybook method, American novelists have begun to seek essences in speech. Such an artist is Bernard De Voto.\*\*\*) Writing a hard, aristocratic hand, he radiates in harsh, metallic rays the spirit of copper, from which the city of Windsor has sprung. And each ray is a person, together they converge at one sun, copper. It is in its entire the story of the disintegration of the third generation of pioneer stock. The germ of this disintegration is in the first step the blaze-finder took. And De Voto achieves with his unyielding hand the sense of origin, the copper-sheet from the molten metal back to the earth-born. The copper-sheet grows soft into sybaritic sippers of "cream in creme de menthe"—symbol of lush decadence.

There is one danger always at Mr. De Voto's heels. It is that in his hard aloofness he may become contemptuous of his characters. Often The Rambler has felt a suggestion of this superiority. But this is Mr. De Voto's first novel, it shows a fine talent well-controlled.

The Rambler.

\*\*) AN OUTLAND PIPER, by Donald Davidson, Boston: Houghton, Mifflin.

\*\*\*) THE CROOKED MILE, by Bernard De Voto, New York: Minton, Balch.

# THE AMERICAN SCENE

## NEW YORK LETTER

The simultaneous presentation this season of two plays remarkably similar in plot, the quick failure of one and the equally quick success of the other, may serve to emphasize the value of form in artistic creation, more pointedly than the pronouncements of the critics. Of these there has been no recent dearth: Clive Bell's theory of "significant form" has become the arsenal of prattlers about painting; the Russian Bakshy has drawn from it to touch off his esthetic of the theatre; T. S. Eliot has still further mechanized — chemicated — the theories of writing. We are constantly reminded that Flaubert once voiced a wish to write a novel without a thought, builded entirely on form.

The same forces that animate the critics impell the search for new art forms. A dozen schools of painting succeeded one another in France, most of them contributing one new (or merely isolating an old) element in the development of technique, then raising it to the be-all and end-all of artistic possibility. In music the barriers have been scaled, and concord and discord work side by side in strange new harmony. In poetry free verse crowds in upon "polyphonic" and other varieties of prose; while prose itself turns turtle or spreads wings or dashes in abrupt zig-zag disjointedness. Every new departure finds a critic champion; every change is epochal. James Joyce's "parallel use of the Odyssey" — to select the most signal instance — "has the importance of a scientific discovery . . . The novel is a form which will no longer serve.... the novel, instead of being a form, was simply the expression of an age which had not sufficiently lost all form to feel the need of something stricter." Similarly we are told that painting, as such, ended with Rubens. Thus lightly do the critics sweep into the discard forms that have spanned centuries.

This great to-do of contemporary artists and their champions is likely to divert our attention, as it has their own, from an essential consideration; namely, that a search after form is a natural phenomenon of periods such as ours, and that therefore, unless we attain detachment, we will tend to over-emphasize that element of art. A critic who develops an enthusiasm is perhaps too engrossed with its potential future to wonder about the past; the artist himself, in his creative moments, has other things of concern than theory. Yet our literature, and before it in a half-century procession all the other arts, have been showing nothing more than the shiftings of taste and the vagaries of experimentation that invariably mark the end and the beginning of a "period." The three outstanding eras of English literature are the Elizabethan, the Classical, and the Romantic. Each began with a turning away from the modes of the moment. The easiest way to turn

is back; they sought earlier models. Another obvious direction is inward; they plumbed their own souls. Or they concentrated on one of these methods because the preceding generation had employed the other. Our own time, having had the advantage of acquaintance with several predecessors, must outvie them all, must discover new directions. Therefore we look back; scornfully at the reliques a new Percy might glean (as in the sophisticated use of the ballad, by Benet and Millay), askance at the dead forms of non-Nordic Greece and Rome (outlandishly renewed in "Ulysses" and the eclectic "Waste Land"), but beyond these to the primitive, and beyond even the primitive to a time when vague sounds sufficed, to the "da-da" stage of language, the early hunting grounds of the intelligence. Also, we thumb our individualities more extensively, to the detail of a Richardson and a Proust, the vague self-questioning of an importunate Anderson, the violence of a Hecht, the poised meaninglessness of a Gertrude Stein. We are different, in a dozen new ways we blindly hope are not blind alleys — yet scores of us rush headlong into every new-made path; and in the impetus of the search we are like other generations, through which the old forms have somehow managed to persist.

As Carlyle pointed out, self-consciousness is a symptom of disease; the healthy body functions spontaneously, without deliberation. When an artist has carried his theme and must give birth, there will be no questioning as to the parturition; the insistence of the idea will bring its form. Only the sterile seek means of creating. Our interest in form, therefore, is another manifestation of the wide-spread barrenness that leads Flinders Petrie to declare that with us one more civilization has come to an end. And it readily comes about that form, engaging the bustle of active artists everywhere, grows in the eyes of critics to be an end in itself. Sought by the genuine artist as a means of fuller self-expression, it lures the insincere to curious devotions, to extreme practices caught up by the eager critics into the formula "form for form's sake." Is it significant that many of the artists, as they mature, return (or advance) to less divergent modes? Is such a progression a sign that after this period of ending and beginning, the coursers down blind alleys will have beaten themselves against the walls, and the steady march will continue on the well-trodden highways of art?

Joseph T. Shipley.

## SOUTHWEST LETTER

Witter Bynner and D. H. Lawrence in Santa Fe the other day were discussing the price of eggs and the intricacies of human relationships at Taos. The conversation ebbed and flowed. I listened vaguely and attentively by turns until I



was jarred awake by the novelist's rather apologetic admission that: "Since I have lived in New Mexico I can no longer think of any other place as being beautiful."

Well! And is this, then, the reason why the Indians have remained in this desert instead of migrating to Beautiful California or Fertile Kansas? Is this why the Spaniards came and stayed? Is this why we have art colonies here? Perhaps. But I am inclined to think not even that is the reason. In fact there is probably no more reason why people should be attracted to Santa Fe and Taos, or to any other place in New Mexico or the Southwest, than there is why a needle should leap to a magnet — nor any less reason. As a matter of fact the causes of both these phenomena seem to me identical. In other words, there is a magnetic pole somewhere in New Mexico or Arizona which scorns the compass but which almost frighteningly draws men's roots into the desert hills.

As Mary Austin has pointed out recently in a new book, this is the Land of Journey's Ending. It is El Dorado now as in ages past. The Indians, the Spanish explorers, the migrating Easterners, the artists, and now the tourists — all have come, and, to repeat, they have stayed.

I have attended in Santa Fe as sophisticated a gathering as an afternoon tea and talked with an Indian from a neighboring pueblo trying to sell turquoise; with a cowboy whose cowboy father was the son of one of the earliest ranchers here; with the scion of one of the old Spanish families who would be a titled gentleman in Spain; with a long-haired artist whose Bohemianism had changed only to the extent of his wearing a velvet Navajo jacket instead of a Parisian smock; with a real estate dealer; and with a tourist. And almost without exception I have talked to them about the houses they have just built, are building, or are about to build. For they all do it. It is one of the properties of these strange magnetic poles which dot the country.

Who knows, it may be the barbed-wire-fence poles which have this strange influence — at least they are all properly connected, wired, grounded, etc. And perhaps the power is generated artificially at Elephant Butte Dam by the government — an invention of Edison's for the purpose of relieving congestion in the East. Certain it is that these same fence posts and all the wiring disappear as soon as a locality is properly settled!

But what can one say of the intellectual and artistic activities of such a region? By calling attention to details, the magnificence of the whole would be lost. If I said that So and So was doing significant work here, you would think of What's his Name in Philadelphia who is doing so much better, and of Do Funny in Woodstock or Carmel. What is important about this country is not so much the fact that novelists (for instance) such as Lawrence, Harvey Fergusson, Robert Herrick, Mary Austin, and Stephen Graham live or come here: but that Theodore Dreiser, Somerset Maugham, and Carl Van Vechten *want* to come, *almost* come or *plan* to come later. Vachel Lindsay has said what I am trying to say when he called Santa Fe the Spiritual Capitol of America. Mary Austin had said it more sedately and with less imagi-

nation, even though she has pretended to be the Great Prophet of the Idea. And now I say it with no imagination or originality at all — but with conviction, nevertheless.

And with two other purposes in mind: 1. To assure careless newspaper readers that Taos is not the name of the Santa Fe art colony, but that it is a separate village and art colony a good many hours, a good many miles, a good many mountains away; and 2. To explain also that New Mexico is one of the United States of North America and not a part of La Republica de Mejico, as even a certain famous writer from a foreign country recently thought! Of course if that particular novelist and playwright had ever been here we might have forgiven him and understood, for New Mexico is undoubtedly America's most foreign, and I might even say, most private part.

Willard Johnson.

## CANADIAN LETTER

The three thousands miles of unguarded border between Canada and the United States may be an excellent illustration of the possibilities of international peace but, from the Canadian point of view, it is a doubtful inspiration for Canadian literature. Across those three thousand miles of boundary, innocent of any fort or gunboat, come streaming into Canada every day tons of American magazines, American newspapers and American syndicated "features." To a less degree this process is repeated at the Eastern Canadian seaports, where every week the "British Mail" arrives with its cargo of British magazines and British newspapers. What the general public in Canada reads, therefore, is imported wares. The "Saturday Evening Post" is the weekly tribute to the Canadian lares and penates as well as to the American household gods. "Answers" and the "London Magazine", children of the late lamented Northcliffe, are found in every Canadian home established by recent British immigrants. Where, to use expressive slang, does the Canadian writer come in? The answer is: He doesn't. As a writer peculiarly and obviously Canadian, he has not yet "arrived." Few of the Canadian readers of the "Post" are aware that Arthur Stringer is a Canadian, while readers of the "London Magazine" are equally criminal in their ignorance of the nationality of their fellow countryman, Charles G. D. Roberts.

Canadian literature, that is, literature written and published in Canada, is of such minute a quantity, that to all intents and purposes it may be considered dead, or dormant at best. There is a Canadian literature of the past but it forms in itself no coherent tradition. It consists more or less of unconnected works of merit—a volume of short fiction such as "Old Man Savarin Stories" here, a humorous work such as "Sam Slick" there—but no school of humorists and no body or tradition of short story writers. Before Canadian literature grew out of the inarticulate stage of Canadian poetry, particularly may we say that it is "inarticulate patriotism" the fleet wings of the American pegasus seemed to paralyze all Canadian literary effort, with the result as we find it today.

Why do not writers like Stringer and Roberts write Canadian literature for Canadian readers? you ask. Why do they not publish their works in Canada? The answer is that these writers have tried and found the Canadian public wanting—something else. Stringer wrote "The Prairie Wife" and "The Prairie Mother"—really instinct with the spirit of the growing, homesteading Western Canada—but discovered that his Canadian audience was both unappreciative and unprofitable. Now he writes "crook stories" for American magazines. Roberts tried to catch the spirit of romantic Canada in his wild animal tales, but he found that Canadians prefer to read his stories, now written in the James Oliver Curwood manner, as they appear in English magazines.

It may be argued that the mere presence of a powerful neighbor to the south and of a motherland across the sea is not sufficient to stultify the attempt to establish a national literature. But how else are we to account for the inferiority of Canadian literary effort. Miss LeClerc Phillips pointed out in an article in "The New York Times" a year ago that Canada, with a population of 9,000,000 has as yet produced no world-renowned figure in literature, while Norway, with a smaller population and with a similar climatic environment, has already produced three — Ibsen, Bjornson and Hamsun. The dominating neighbor and the lordly motherland have given Canada an inferiority complex and this is affecting her national life and literature.

Under the circumstances it is very difficult for Canada to emerge with a national literature sufficiently powerful to make her famous internationally. Such an emergence is dependent, it seems to me, upon the creation of a national spirit such as kindled the glorious flame of Elizabethan literature or American literature after the Civil War. But

Canada has not yet achieved nationhood. Even in the census book, no one save a native Indian is listed as a Canadian. The country is vexed by the presence of a French-Canadian province, Quebec, between the west and the east. A thousand miles of barren country in New Ontario further separate one end from the other, and while new settlers have come pouring into Western Canada from Central Europe the essential nationality of the east remains the same. And in addition, no nation in modern times has been subject to an inundation such as Canada is at present experiencing as a result of the tremendous production of American printing-presses.

Yet the more optimistic look for a new spirit in Canada because of the country's entry into the war, in which 60,000 Canadians died. They believe that the war has united Canada as no other agency could have done. Others look to the land itself as the true inspiration of a national literature. If, they argue, a Parisian Frenchman, an alien, could write his epic of "Marie Chapdelaine" of Quebec, what may not a native born Canadian do, who has witnessed the miracle of an ice-bound land resurrected to life in the Spring, or has bathed in the mirrored waters of Canada's lakes? To me, the land itself and the quiet, unassuming people in it, if they can only be brought to realize that the future is in their hands, hold the greatest promise for the emergence of an enduring Canadian literature. With that realization will come a revolt against the dominance both of the United States and Great Britain.

Meanwhile, a Canadian girl writes a story of life in a little Icelandic settlement on the shores of Lake Winnipeg and wins first prize in an American novel contest. I refer to Miss Margaret Ostenso and to her novel, "Wild Goose." Needless to say it will first appear in an American magazine.

*N. B. Zimmerman.*



# Book Reviews

## EMILY DICKINSON

### THE COMPLETE POEMS OF EMILY DICKINSON.

Little, Brown and Co., 1924. \$3.50.

### LIFE AND LETTERS OF EMILY DICKINSON.

*Edited by Martha Dickinson Bianchi.* Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924. \$4.00.

Consider the two following brief passages from the writings of Emily Dickinson.

No romance sold unto, could so enthrall a man as the perusal of his individual one. 'Tis fiction to dilute to plausibility *our* novel. When 'tis small enough to credit—'t isn't true!

And :

The hearts of Amherst ache to-night—  
You could not know how hard.  
They thought they could not wait, last night,  
Because that you were coming.  
The flowers waited, in the vase,  
And love got peevish, watching.  
A railroad person rang,  
To bring an evening paper.

The one seems to be somewhat cryptic prose, generous of ellipsis; the other, halting verse or perhaps a first sketch, laid down on a metrical pattern, to be later worked over into verse. As a matter of fact, the first passage is a poem in "The Single Hound" printed as prose; the second is a passage from one of her letters, rearranged with line divisions as verse. Of her six hundred odd poems scores might be similarly printed as prose without danger of detection as other than ragged, cadenced, gnomic jottings of thought and fancy. And on the other hand, Miss Dickinson's letters contain similar scores of passages which, with no readjustment save that of line-division, might find place among her poems. It would be erroneous, however, to deduce from such jugglers' experiments the conclusion that her "prose is verse and verse is simply prose." Rather, her letters contain many nuggets of thought only slightly less obviously fashioned towards a poetic form than other such nuggets which she set down as verse. Her mind expressed itself best in short, sharp, subtle, epigrammatic form; for the sake of terseness she willingly sacrificed lucidity. Her grammar is haphazard; her metres commonplace and often unlovely; her sense of rhyme faulty and tolerant even of incorrect assonance. Often the connection

between image and underlying thought is obscure, and the reader who makes the required effort finds that that effort is frequently not repaid. Miss Dickinson's poems are all very short, many merely iambic quatrains or octaves. At least five-sixths of them might be winnowed out as chips and chaff in order to bring out the quality of the remaining fraction. Hence it is that the passage of a few of her poems into the anthologies has given her a fame out of proportion to her merits; and only less loyal than the anthologies to her reputation is the volume of selected poems which Mr. Conrad Aiken has just published in England. To read the entire corpus of her poems is an arduous task. The attention flags as it passes from tiny scrap to scrap of verse. It becomes difficult to do justice to her successful pieces, differing as they do from the failures only by being more polished in form, less forced in figure.

To read Emily Dickinson from cover to cover of a collection occupying more than three hundred pages is to understand why she left testamentary directions that all her manuscripts should be burnt. This is a harsh thing to say of a poet; and it must be quickly added that very few poets are subjected to such a test. But it needs to be said just now when there are signs that this little New England lady is becoming the object of a "cult." She was not a great poet. To compare her to Emily Bronte, as do Mr. Armstrong, Mr. Aiken, Mrs. Bianchi and others, is ridiculous; indeed Mrs. Bianchi's biography supplies the refutation, for on page 101 the grand lines "No coward soul is mine" are quoted — equal in strength of spirit to anything of Miss Dickinson's and immeasurably beyond her powers as an artist.

She was, indeed, no artist; or at best, a hasty, impatient artist, unwilling to polish and refine and shape into comeliness. Her biographer speaks of her frequent revisions of poems; but the revisions were undertaken for the sake of greater accuracy of expression and never to insure a deeper beauty. Her faculty of packed utterance leads when successful to very moving thought; at its worst to an obscurity due to muddled and impatient thinking rather than to profundity of thought. She was, I think, an eager collector of material for poetry rather than a pure poet. Her eagerly inquisitive mind, ranging through "Life, Nature, Love, Time and Eternity," snatched up bright sparkling fragments here and there and everywhere. Some of these scraps were jewels that demanded only skilful working to make them things of beauty; generally Miss Dickinson was content to leave them half-fashioned. Other scraps were paste from the first and look genuine to some observers only because they shine with light reflected from the authentic few. In the collected edition it is difficult to turn

to these few admirable pieces because, while keeping the groupings adopted by the editors of the three original posthumous volumes, the arrangement within the several groups is now confused and the familiar titles given by her editors to some of the best pieces have been suppressed. The grand lines on the utter sincerity of "a look of agony"; those others on "the bustle in the house the morning after death"; the quatrain on the weight of a syllable; the lines on Parting—these represent that best. The verse is excellent of its kind, with something of Herrick, something of Blake (as Colonel Higginson recognized), something of Emerson; but it is not the highest kind.

The few outward facts of her life are familiar to everyone who knows her poetry. Mrs. Bianchi's book adds little of value save the letters. In the preface we are told that "a high exigence constrains the sole survivor of her family to state her simply and truthfully." I do not question the truth of the niece's portrait; but there is a plentiful lack of simplicity in the style. Had Emily no premonitions when she forbade a formal biography? Did "the wings and fins of her soaring and diving mind" (to borrow Mrs. Bianchi's metaphor) bear her into the future to foresee this volume? If so, that "bare-beaded life under grass of which she wrote must be uneasy now-a-days."

Samuel C. Chew.

## THE REALIZATION OF A DREAM

STORIES OF THE FIRST PIONEERS IN PALESTINE, by Hannah Trager: foreword by Israel Zangwill. New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., \$2.00.

Full of charm and romance is a people's struggle for independence, interwoven with thousands of sentiments and innumerable sacrifices. Much more romantic is such a struggle of a people who have been deprived, for nearly two thousand years, of the privilege to live upon the soil of their fathers; who, although scattered the world over, cradled in many cultures, have nourished a deep love for the deserts of their one time glory and whose fight is directed not against an oppressive Monarch or a dominating class, but against nature herself and a host of treacherous neighbors. For such is the strife of the Jews in their endeavor to restore to Palestine its long lost fame; and fragments of this fantastic, almost fanatic struggle breathe forth from the pages of Mrs. Trager's latest work.

Mrs. Trager's *Stories of the First Pioneers* is not a history of the Jewish Colonization in Palestine—an adequate history of that colonization, depicting its romance, perils and dangers, remains yet to be written—it is, however, valuable material for the historian of the future. Written, as it is, in a biographical form, subjective, almost a collection of reminiscences of bygone days, the book takes one to the very inception of Jewish Colonization in the Holy Land, the founding of the first and largest Jewish Colony, Petach Tikvah. One must himself, like the reviewer, trample the sands of Palestine,

mingling his perspiration with the desert-dust, to understand and follow, with the help of Mrs. Trager's guiding hand, the slow development of these Jewish idealistic enterprises; to perceive the hostilities of the Arabs—subdued as they may be by now—that menace Jewish efforts; to appreciate the sacrifices Jews have brought and still bring, the hardships they are confronted with in their efforts to establish a Homeland.

Although not a complete work—it has for its subject the growth and developments of but one colony—*Stories of the First Pioneers* is interesting, encouraging and refreshing. It at once rectifies the position of the Jew before the non-Jewish world. It discards the existing prejudices that the Jew is greedy, selfish and rapacious, and brings to light his true nature, as yet unknown, unrevealed—generous, idealistic, self-denying, self-sacrificing. It tells the story of those first Jewish Pioneers, who sacrificed comfort, position in society, future aspirations for a life in a desert full of peril and danger; how they, nourished by a great, genuine ideal, have fought against malaria, trachoma, blindness and the treachery of the Arabs. There are fine stories embodied in this volume of the early Jewish life in Palestine, the building of a future on quicksands, yet solidified by a persistency, labor and courage that resulted in a gratifying monument of Jewish achievements. One finds there stories both pathetic and joyous; stories of death from malaria, of blindness from trachoma, of Arab attacks on Jewish Colonies, interwoven with those of rejoicing on every accomplishment, over every step toward the realization of their dream.

"A race that persist in celebrating their vintage though they have no fruits to gather, will regain their vineyards"—wrote Benjamin Disraeli in the eighteen forties. Mrs. Trager's accounts prove beyond reasonable doubt the value of this great Statesman's predictions. Jews are already celebrating the vintage of the fruits they themselves gather, rejoice over the products of their toil in the land of their future aspirations. It is well to track the source of any great idealistic movement from its very inception, to watch the different little streams branching out in all directions, only to reunite, at some distance, into a more powerful, gushing body. Mrs. Trager's work more than affords such a study, for it deals with a movement that began before Balfour has made known his famous, well-meant declaration, before Herzl sounded the trumpet of political Zionism and even before there existed a non-political Zionism that arose through the *Chovevei Zion* (Lovers of Zion). It allows us to watch, through the eyes of Mrs. Trager, the procession of a handful of Jewish idealists, marching forward, regardless of obstacles, dangers, failures and discouragements. It affords us a better insight into the work of the present Jewish Pioneers, the Haluzim, who, after leaving good homes, universities, stream to the gates of the Holy Land, content with a laborer's work and earnings. These young idealists come to Palestine not in search of gold or fame, but prompted by a great desire—to be among those who are ready to sacrifice everything, themselves for the restoration of a Jewish Homeland.

*Stories of the First Pioneers* is written with a charm and earnestness of one who has some vital and interesting facts to



record; and should be enjoyed by Jew and Gentile alike. Mrs. Trager has done valuable work not only because she is recapturing for history these rich details of Jewish idealistic life in Palestine; not only in her portrayal of Jewish achievements, but also and above all in her effort to bring before the non-Jewish world the true nature of Jewish idealism, its spirit and its capability.

*Abraham N. Gerbovoy.*

## THE ODYSSEY OF THE SPIRIT VOYAGING SOUTHWARD FROM THE STRAIT OF MAGELLAN. *By Rockwell Kent.* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$7.50.

Inlanders, caught in the rigid mesh of skyscrapers and subways, yearn for the unattainable sea and the vast inviting reaches of *terra incognita*. The fruitless passion will not be denied. It must exult somehow. So, while a few like Rockwell Kent, valorously pluck Fate by the beard and stubbornly frolic forth in a kind of bright recklessness, the remainder must at least have their palpitation by proxy. They devour insatiably the books of travel that pour unceasingly from the publishing houses,—books good, bad and indifferent.

Among this ruck of journey-mongers Rockwell Kent is a man apart, and "Voyaging" is a book apart. For there is in him, first of all, a rare double gift. He can speak to us with the language of the word, beautifully as few writers can; but he can also speak with the language of the line. For his book no flat photographs of island sirens and pig-sticking cannibals are needed. He draws what he sees. And there is in him, secondly, an equally rare grace of spirit—half-concealing, half-revealing a shy mysticism — which leaves the reader in a gentle glow of serenity.

"Voyaging" is the record, in pictures and prose, of his most illogical and altogether unsystematic trip to the unvisited regions of Tierra del Fuego. It is his whimsy to look upon Cape Horn. He arrives at Punta Arenas, accompanied only by one Ole Ytterock, a Norwegian, who, if his face was a wreck, was still sufficiently handsome in muscle and good spirit. Generous friends aid the mad jaunt, providing the improvident wanderers with all necessities, even to a boat which develops a menacing leak shortly after embarkation. At Dawson Island the boat is repaired. They sail southward, and anon Kent plays his silver flute to calm the waves. An unfavorable wind delays them at Bahia Blanca. Refusing to be daunted, they become explorers, and tramp overland by untrodden routes, emerging to the astonishment of the natives. At Ushuaia they inveigle Lundberg—an accommodating though procrastinating Swede — into providing them with a boat. After infinite delays, they put to sea again. But the engine is aged and treacherous. They are forced to turn back after one far-off tantalizing glimpse of Cape Horn.

Such are the stages of the journey. The brief outline, however, conveys not at all the full nature of the book, which is as much a record of personalities as of places. Outcasts, Indians, ranches, madman, — whatever they are, they are

mostly of lonely hearts which unfold warmly to greet the stranger. The watchful artist catches them and records them at the gentle moment of the unfolding — Juan Rompuela, the crack-brained cook, who adores Kent's flute-playing and deprecates the boorish inattention of the patron; Mulach, the child-like German, who chased guanacos or built fires with furious enthusiasm; the gentleman lumber-jacks, Don Antonio and Curly. On these one would like to linger. But it is necessary to wind into the core of the book and make essential discoveries.

It is unfair, perhaps, to compare Rockwell Kent with W. H. Hudson, but Hudson obstinately enters the mind as one reads. Rockwell Kent has Hudson's trick of elevating the unspectacular and making it shine with an inward significant light, though his prose, occasionally broken and discursive or sometimes touched with a glint of casualness, does not quite attain the serene fluidity of Hudson's language. In Kent's narrative the adventures are more subjective than physical, and though he is sometimes at the extreme point of peril, there is no great clash of events. Rather the book is a series of moods focused upon the incidental objects of a journey. Thus "Voyaging" is an Odyssey of the spirit, and it is in this respect especially that it attains distinction among current books of travel.

If we press beyond these excellencies, there is still much to discover. Let the art critic discourse on the drawings, if he will. The lay reader can only wonder and admire, suspecting in his heart that Kent the painter may be a greater artist than Kent the writer, splendid though the latter be. Perhaps also there is not a perfect fusion of spirit between picture and prose. In the drawings there is a brooding solemnity, an air of Blake-like mysticism, that appears only most vagrantly and modestly in the narrative, occasionally cropping out in the form of parentheses and soliloquizing. It is hard to throw off a feeling that Rockwell Kent has not quite let himself go and that certain important essentials of Rockwell Kent have been suppressed in deference to a more or less journalistic narrative. Such strictures are of negligible importance. But they are the basis for a hope that some time Rockwell Kent will make a voyage to Atlantis or other realms on which only a mystical imagination can report, and where both hand and tongue, working in fair union, may have full and fantastic play.

*Donald Davidson.*

## THE APPLE OF A PAIR OF YOUNG EYES

THE APPLE OF THE EYE. *By Glenway Wescott.* New York: Lincoln Macveigh, The Dial Press. \$.250.

At its infrequent best, narrative may be profoundly moving in itself, and it may be profoundly satisfying in its manner of relation. It seems to me unnecessary to lose sight of either of these approaches to perfection merely on account of the stressing of the other one; but until the words "classical" and "romantic" are withdrawn from circulation, the absence of the one quality on the presence of the other will remain

among the most noticeable things about works of narrative fiction.

The Apple of the Eye is one of the most moving narratives that I have read in recent American fiction, and its power is due to the conjunction that appears in it between a beautifully unspoiled humanism and a sensitive awareness of the inhuman loveliness of earth. From these two contrasting loves comes a serene modern version of the evocation of pity and terror — not the tragedy of the ancients, but rather of a rejuvenated world, or a younger lover of man and nature. Mr. Wescott is not one to love nature less or man the more; so the beauty of his scenes of human passion is heightened by the inclusion of physics, transcribed for the fictional instrument with an emotion of which "description" has for a long time seemed incapable. This is effected partly by the revival of the ancient figure of oxymoron that enlivens the texts of so many modern writers, and partly by the happy use of other metaphors that have never gone out of literary style.

As for the manner of relation in this novel—the "shape" of its narrative—some of its smaller divisions are not above reproach, especially in the numerous retarded transitions that become thereby digressions: but for a story whose key is that of spatial and temporal expanse—the far stretch of Wisconsin marshes, the unending series of summers "falling from the thin trees"—the succession from a casual beginning in pathos that is not itself a beginning through two generations of a sinful family to a casual end in pathos that is not itself an end, seems a succession that fits the story as no "well-constructed" plot could do. It is the deeds and motives of that sinful family, who did not hold Jehovah's law as the apple of their eyes, that make up the story: and its beginning is in that violent night in which Bad Han pushed her drunken father out of the door, so that he died from the fall; there is her lover's marriage to the church organist, and the training of their daughter in strict observance of the "law"; the daughter's suicide after her adultery with the hired man, who was also the friend and corrupter of her young cousin Dan; the sad aberration of young Dan from his mother's ways, and at the end of the book his faring forth into the world, a maiden knight. In this shifting narrative, the emphasis finally rests thus on Dan alone, with whom the story is brought to a close just as he begins to show interesting variations from the familiar hero awaking to adolescent love.

It is not often that a novel comes my way that has sufficient narrative power to sweep aside a recurring structural awkwardness as of small importance. This is what The Apple of the Eye does, and Mr. Wescott's book has the added rare quality of a style richly suggestive in imagery if rather bare of constructional variations.

Hansell Baugh.

## REVIEWS IN BRIEF

WHO WOULD BE FREE. By *Marian Spitzer*. New York: Boni & Liveright. \$2.00.

The first half of Miss Spitzer's novel is autobiographical. She herself, like her heroine, Elinor Hoffman, was brought up in a German-Jewish household where her parents expected her to follow in the family footsteps: go to synagogue, associate only with other German-Jews, go to Normal School, and marry a German-Jew. The second half of the book, in which the young girl revolts against old prejudices and attempts to free herself, is partly fact and partly fancy. Marian Spitzer has made out of Elinor Hoffman the girl she herself would like to be: self-sufficient, self-confident, never swayed by an emotion which is not for her own material advancement.

The book is intelligently written, frankly slangy, frankly photographic. Miss Spitzer thinks. And she has talent.

HARVEST. By *David Morton*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. Mr. Morton writes sonnets. Mr. Morton belongs to the Seductive Moonlight School of poesy, as Mr. Farrar belongs to the Peanut—Shell school. There is some little, reminiscent seductiveness to the former, but in the latter just hollowness. Morton's pretenses have been the pretenses of poets since the first day; one throws off their seductions quite easily.

ENTICEMENT. By *Clive Arden*. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. \$2.00. Will entice only those who enjoy stirring love dramas.

HAMMER MARKS. By *Arthur Hougham*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. \$2.00. This author house-painter appreciates beauty.

THE MYSTERY OF THE OPAL. By *Rupert Sargent Holland*. Philadelphia: George W. Jacobs Company. \$2.00. Mr. Holland specializes in tales which prove the soundness of their titles.

ANCIENT FIRES. By *I. A. R. Wylie*. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. \$2.00. An adventure story skilfully combining romance, philosophy, and hairbreadth escapes.

THE COLOUR OF YOUTH. By *V. H. Friedlaender*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$2.00. Miss Friedlaender proves again that youth's colour is bright and hopeful.

WANDERING STARS. By *Clemence Dane*. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.25. Two short stories written with dramatic clarity.

DAVID BLAIZE OF KING'S. By *E. F. Benson*. New York: George H. Doran Company. \$2.00. An optimistic picture of college years.



**THE GREEN HAT.** By *Michael Arlen*. New York: George H. Doran Company. \$2.50. More Arlen for sophisticates who like more sophistication.

**PROFESSOR, HOW COULD YOU!** By *Harry Leon Wilson*. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation. \$2.00. Many laughs at the expense of all hen-pecked males.

**THE GOLDEN BED.** By *Wallace Irwin*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$2.00. Mr. Irwin writes a novel of American life ridiculing stupid class distinctions.

**CHRIS GASCOYNE.** By *Arthur C. Benson*. New York: E. P. Dutton Company. \$2.00. Leisurely writing in imitation of half a century ago.

**ESSAYS OF PRESENT DAY WRITERS.** Collected by *Raymond Pierce*. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.00. A group of heterogeneous authors for many heterogeneous readers.

**THE HIGH ALTAR.** By *Agnes Rothery*. New York: Doubleday Page. \$2.00. Fairly realistic study of a girl's sacrifice.

## Contributors Corner

**TOWARD A HIGHER CONCEPTION OF RELIGION:** The modern temper, quickened to a sense of material progress and dramatic change, directs the quest for principles of guidance not to the past but to the present. As regards ethics, or morality in the broadest sense, an historic basis can no longer be considered adequate for the swiftly moving drama of life in the present. The modern mind demands reasons; and reasons in support of conforming to old codes often cannot be found, or, if found, are not unlikely to prove inimical to modern standards of progress and welfare.

Living, coming in contact with people, mixing in affairs and business, cultivating appreciation of modern arts, keeping abreast of science and invention, seeking recreation and pleasure — all this must be conducted in a practical manner after a highly modern pattern. The staffs of ancient wisdom or dogma bend or break when we lean too heavily upon them. Expectations are awry, foresight is surprised, novelty slips into every encounter. Life, in short, is always being presented in the slightly or greatly modified form of a new adventure. It may be a dull adventure; but we did not aim at dulness and in that consists the adventure. Hence a good many people have thrown away the old staffs, or have left them untouched in dusty racks in dark corners, and have hurried out the door, hands empty perhaps, but hands free.

Were we certain that events and circumstances would repeat themselves, then could we expect to derive wisdom from the past. In matters pertaining to general results of general conduct, the past does teach a good deal. A rather

comprehensive outline of morality, in fact, is available in this way, much of it being inherited. This outline of morality may be likened to the constant and unchanging outline of nature. But just as repetition in nature is never duplication, but involves some change; so human experience is never duplicated but is invariably fraught with novelty. It is this novelty that is constantly challenging the intelligent man or woman to a wise determination of conduct. The possible ways of acting, the various possible consequences, provoke consideration; and the form the act eventually takes is determined by the person's appraisal of the promised result.

Now that appraisal, with thoughtful persons, is pretty certain to include values pertaining to the spiritual and moral sense. The acts which make the greatest returns in satisfaction and joy are high-minded, socially constructive acts. Perhaps some people have to be told this, even hypnotized into believing it. But understanding pursued far enough teaches it to all, while experience clinches and drives home the teaching. Thus there are persons, unassociated with special forms of religion, who are, as their acts and lives show, moved by most vital considerations of religion.

To define religion anew is bound to be one of the tasks of the present century. That it is a belief binding the spiritual nature of man to a supernatural being, is too narrow for the opened universe. Religion, considered as belief, is merely the acceptance of some theory including a conception of God and of divine authority. In order to include religious persons not identified with a religion, the definition must be broadened to embrace any credible explanation of life from which may be derived principles of effective and noble living.

Most, if not all, of the established religions are exceedingly old. The acquirement of accurate knowledge about nature and natural processes, is, on the other hand, comparatively new. Contradictions therefore, as we well know, are bound to exist; and a person, to be honest with himself, must effect some sort of a compromise. Most naturally great numbers of persons arrive at the necessity of rejecting the older explanations, which they are asked to believe upon the authority of divine revelation, in favor of what is revealed through the study of nature.

The trouble is, some may here object, natural knowledge does not provide an explanation. Certainly it does not explain the mystery of life, nor acquaint us with a knowable God, nor provide a definite plan for the exercise of religious feeling. But on the other hand it gives us a very clear explanation of our situation as human beings in a world of natural beings, objects and forces; and it provides us with invaluable instruction as to how to get along there.

Those to whom such instruction is available do in fact find the foreshadowing of a more complete explanation in modern scientific thought; and from this they are able to derive principles, or plastic discretion, for effective and noble living. The gist of this is that life is an adventure in an ever-changing world, and that the success of the adventure depends upon the person, that is, the person's judgment in meeting and handling life. The values of life are revealed

in experience. Virtue, morality, noble traits of character, carry their own credentials. To the mind sensitive to human potentialities nothing is more desirable, more inspiring, more compensatory in fine motifs of joy, than to push on creatively toward a higher plane of being.

The deepest of religious considerations move in such an attitude toward life. There is that in man which will derive religious feeling from contemplating a stone, if the Easter lily be taken from him. The mystery of the Universe is recognized by many who are fallaciously called atheists. Actual atheism resides only in the human mind grovelling in animalism, the mind denying, or failing to rise to, a recognition of the significance of being human. In some form, or formlessly, intimations of the Great Unknown will come; and to that mental abode best furnished with the knowledge of nature the greatest and most sublime conception of God is most likely to find its way. From religious reflections chastened and humbled by knowledge, worship flowers forth in lives consecrated to truth, beauty, and service. It may even be that deepest realization of religion is composed of inner feelings and emotions too sacred for words and overt signs.

*George Law.*

**TAKING ISSUE WITH MR. MORDELL:** In emphasizing the personal element in literature Mr. Mordell seems to overlook everything but the subject matter of the books; he dismisses Shakspeare's debt to his period by saying "the plot, form, and technique alone are due to Elizabethan models." Surely the influence of an age is considerable, if it can determine, even partially, the "plot, form, and technique" of its writers. Mr. Mordell also says, of Wordsworth, "He might, because of his temperament, have written these poems had he lived in the age of Pope." In the first place, as an obvious retort, such a temperament did not develop in the age of Pope; this allows the suggestion that the age may have been hostile to such spirits. Furthermore, Wordsworth's time was a period of direct reaction from the dried-out classicism before him, a reaction that began earlier, with Collins and Thomson and Gray. Had Mr. Mordell wished to secure better examples of freedom from social influences, he might have gone to the Scotch ballad writers, Mallet, Jean Adams, Robert Fergusson, Robert Burns, men who were out of touch with the literary movement, whom the general drift of civilization moved but slightly.

"There is no reason why a lover of literature should be compelled to study the French Revolution or to follow the stream of English literature from Beowulf down." I agree to the desirability of "no compulsion", but a considered survey of our literature may reveal a gradual and natural growth. Let me attempt it in two dozen words. The Saxons were interested in external things, in man's encounters with the forces of his environment, in fighting and feasting, in the sea and the soil. By the next definite expression of any worth, man's concern had centered more upon himself, though still external; Chaucer gives us as complete a portrait gallery as any we possess in the language. From man's acts and appearance attention shifted to his emotions; the Elizabethans (still

with great love of nature) apply natural objects as figures to convey human feeling. This feeling deepens, but in two directions: the one toward the sense of duty, the control of emotion; the other toward pleasure, the exercise of emotion; and we have the cavalier poems of honor and love (chivalry and dalliance) contrasted with the puritan poems of service. Out of these two extremes came conflict, which was finally decided by the reign of common sense, the period of the development of the essay, the newspaper and the novel, when attention turned to conduct, to the outward manner, gradually as substitute for the inner feeling. By a natural process this crystallized into the conventions and rules of the classical period, which in time drew their natural reaction toward freedom in the romantic school.

With many omissions and minor allowances for so sketchy a presentation, the truth of this will be disputed only by the brand of philosopher who claims that all the order we find in nature rises only from man's inveterate tendency to impose his habits of thought upon nature and history. Which grants as much truth as any idea may boast . . . and perhaps justifies the historical survey of a nation's literature. (One must, it goes without saying, have enjoyed an article that can stir so lengthily a response.)

*Joseph T. Shipley.*

**THE DEBATE OF THE SEASON:** "The American public would go on just as easily were all the printing-presses to stop tomorrow. New Yorkers would go on living just as happily if The New York World were to go out of business today."

"Hiss! Hiss!"

"Oh, not that I mention The New York World particularly, but—"

"And what would happen if your Society for the Suppression of Vice were to go out of business?"

Thus debated Mr. John S. Sumner, Secretary of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice and the audience of New York's elite sunetoi in Town Hall on November 8. Opposed to Mr. Sumner in the debate—Resolved: That limitations upon the contents of books and magazines as defined in proposed legislation would be detrimental to the advancement of American literature—was Mr. Ernest Boyd, author and critic of international repute, but as active in refutation against Mr. Sumner were Mr. Boyd's allies in front of the rostrum. Mr. Sumner stood alone, unfriended, open to ridicule, taking stab after stab like a stoic.

"The debate of the season" we read in the advertisements. We came and here is what we heard:

John Farrar, the blonde, young editor of the Bookman, announced that he had purchased a new Ingersoll to keep the opponents within their allotted times.

Clifford Smyth, editor of the International Book Review, introduced the two antagonists by relating the story of Daudet



and Sappho. The great American publishers had cabled to Daudet that "Sappho" was impossible. He answered, "Add another P." Orthography, not pornography, was the fault visible to the Gallic author.

Ernest Boyd, bearded, sensitive, immaculate, arose, and in refined, sardonic accents began somewhat in this manner:

"I am at a loss. I am to take the affirmative side of a debate in which I must first establish the negative. I can find no proposed legislation against literature except the laws which have lain idle for two years.

"Mr. Sumner objects to books from socially degenerate and morbid countries. I come from Ireland, socially degenerate and morbid.

"Obscenity is to be censored. What is obscenity? Things are obscene only to those who think them obscene. I refuse to let anyone decide what things call forth obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy, or disgusting thoughts in my brain.

"Mr. Sumner believes in books that express Americanism. What is Americanism? Who shall be the one to decide whether a book is American or not? Was 'Jurgen' originally an American book? Then, during its suppression, was it frightfully un-American? And now is it true to Nordic ideals once more?"

Mr. Boyd sat down amidst the applause of his delighted listeners. Mr. Sumner arose as welcome as a shower during the football season. He lifted a huge pile of formidable white paper, and began:

"Of course, we all cannot be as gifted as the group of superintellec[t]s to which my illustrious opponent belongs. To us common mortals certain things are lewd, lascivious, filthy, disgusting, and obscene. Mr. Boyd knows as well as anyone what the proposed legislation is. And I know what Americanism is. I do not know anything about American literature."

Tremendous applause from the audience.

"I know a little about French books. You know the French people."

Hisses!

"Not that I want to say anything about the French nation. I was in Paris myself."

Applause.

"And I met some French families of good condition. And Russia — you all know what a morbid, dark country that is. English novels have a little piety, a little sport, and a little love-making. But the American novel—"

Before Mr. Sumner could illuminate his hearers, Mr. John Farrar's Ingersoll beat time out.

Judge for yourself of the efficacy of the debate. Translator of De Maupassant versus Society for Suppression of Vice. Mr. Boyd saying there is no such absolute as obscenity, and Mr. Sumner saying that absolutely everyone knows what obscenity means.

The next day Laurence Stallings came out with the statement that George Saintsbury or some other genuine conservative could have given Ernest Boyd a real tussle. We have found an American opponent for Mr. Boyd, not on the proposed legislation, but on any censorship whatsoever — Dr. Stuart P. Sherman. In his newest collection of essays called "Points of View", Dr. Sherman has his answers for Mr. Boyd and Mr. Sumner, whose arguments he calls "violent partisan combats between champions of literature who express their contempt for public morals, and champions of public morals who express their contempt for literature." Reformers, he writes, injure their cause by trying to make the world safe for children and adolescents, an impossibility, and authors do sometimes dwell with no sense of proportion on the life of the senses. What he sees the need for is an independent and dispassionate criticism of literature, by a body of men of letters officially appointed by the American Academy to pass judgment on questionable books. The law is absolutely the wrong method to apply. "But if anyone declares that his instrument is more inadequate than the law, I shall retort, as Mr. Chesterton retorts to those who declare that Christianity has failed, 'It has never been tried'. All the questions which must be asked and answered in regard to literature and morals are 'a little over the head of the New York policeman.' They are problems for an independent and dispassionate criticism. Unless we are prepared to answer them, we are not yet properly prepared to say what books are unprintable.

We should like to hear in ye Town Hall Stuart Sherman and Ernest Boyd express their separate "points of view."

*Madelin Leof.*

### THE SEVEN ARTS CLUB

There is at present a generous flurry among what Mr. Maurice Speiser calls "the younger spirits" of Philadelphia. The Friends of Chamber Music Society, The Guardian, The Seven Arts Club. On Sunday evening, November 16, the last of the three initiated its program with a "talk" by Mr. Heywood Broun and a play, "The Emperor Jones."

Mr. Broun presented his column (which he had "acted" before in a revue)—a typical lecture-platform-vodvil garrulity. Without wishing to be hypercritical, yet not apologising if I seem so, I would like to know whether Mr. Broun was meant as an appetizer? If he was intended as such, I can but say a healthy mind needs no appetizer. If the Seven Arts Club had for its purpose (and I know it hasn't) the pleasant filling-in of a Philadelphia Sunday evening, I should say, "very well". But its aim is larger than that: it is the creation of a setting congenial to art. Certainly Philadelphia needs it. But certainly a mind like Mr. Broun cannot create a pinch of dust for what he called "the road to Seville."

Well, you will say, that's over. Not entirely. You know Philadelphia: easy-going, tolerant of mediocrity, self-complacent. Three or four laughs of an evening suffice for an acceptance of the laugh-producer as a good sort, and therefore good enough. But, damn it, we've had good-enough long enough. We must dedicate ourselves to the genuine, the meaningful, the



purposeful, even at the risk of being called "snobbish", "high-brow" and "intellectual."

The promise of such dedication is already implied in several of the future programs, particularly in the presentation of a man who has done probably more for the furtherance of American art and the American artist than any other. I refer to Alfred Stieglitz. When the history of American art is written, as already chapters of it have been and are being written (Anderson's *Story-Teller's Story*, Frank's *Salvos*, Kreymborg's autobiography), Alfred Stieglitz's name will lead all the rest.

An important, perhaps the most important, detail in the Sunday programs of The Seven Arts Club is its favoring of Philadelphia artists, the first group of which, The Hedgerow Players, presented the O'Neill play.

Mr. Paul Robeson of The Provincetown Players was Brutus Jones, The Emperor. A figure large, commanding, but too burly for the clever, alert, Napoleonic Jonesey. In the first scene he had little of the shrewd sarcasm of Charles Gilpin, little of the latter's perspicacity. A sonorous voice sang into a mist joining with the eeriness and the growing enveloping of the O'Neill play; but in his praying there was more roar than plea — Mr. Gilpin's swallowing of the "er" of "sinner" into a whimper of a terrified, exhausted "child". I deliberately emphasize "child."

The tempo of the play was slightly hurried, the eeriness at times bore more heavily than it should, but altogether this half of the program contained the germ of a justification for the existence of The Seven Arts Club as a cultural unit.

H. A. P.

## THE HEDGEROW THEATRE

Andreyev's *KING HUNGER* will receive its second performance anywhere in the world at the Plays and Players

Club in Philadelphia on December 6. Once before, in Munich, the play was acted. The Hedgerow Players, directed by Jasper Deeter, have undertaken to give *KING HUNGER* its American showing.

Andreyev was an individualistic writer with a universal attitude that was at the same time personal. *KING HUNGER*, which he wrote in 1907, is more medieval than Greek drama. It is full of fire and irony. The contending forces are terror and ironic laughter. It has no plot: it is merely a succession of episodes with deep emotional interest. Hunger, the leading role, is done by Jasper Deeter. Marc Blitzstein is arranging the music, and Mordecai Gorelik has come from New York to design the production. The entire Hedgerow group is taking part in the play. In a few weeks, in conjunction with the Inter. Theatre Arts, Inc., they expect to take the play to Broadway.

